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# DRAMATICS

An Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

XXV, No. 8

MAY, 1954

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## SILVER ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

### FEATURE PREVIEW OF THE NATIONAL DRAMATIC ARTS CONFERENCE

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DORIS MARSOLAIS MARSHALL

### THEATRE STAGING: PUBLICITY, PROMOTION, PERFORMANCE

TED SKINNER

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## CONTENTS

SERIES	PAGE
I Direct a Play <i>by Doris Marsolais Marshall</i> .....	16
Arena Staging: Publicity, Promotion, Performance <i>by Ted Skinner</i> .....	17

ARTICLE	PAGE
Two for the Show <i>by Lillian Decker Masters</i> .....	14

FEATURES	PAGE
In This Issue .....	2
As I See It .....	3
More in '54 (Picture Preview of Silver Anniversary Conference) .....	4
The Power of Organization <i>by Paul E. Opp</i> .....	12
Planting the Seed <i>by Earl W. Blank</i> .....	12
Thespian Chatter .....	26
Index to Volume XXV .....	35

DEPARTMENTS	PAGE
TV <i>by Si Mills</i> .....	20
Radio <i>by Si Mills</i> .....	21
Plays of the Month <i>Edited by Earl Blank</i> .....	22
Movies <i>by Paul Myers</i> .....	24
Theatre <i>by Paul Myers</i> .....	25
Brief Views <i>by Willard Friederich</i> .....	36

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## In this Issue

**LILLIAN DECKER MASTERS**, Director, Children's Theatre, Terre Haute, Indiana, stresses again the value of a children's theatre production by our member Thespian troupes in her article, *Two for the Show*. She believes, and so do I, that drama for children strengthens the high school theatre, the college theatre, the community theatre and the professional theatre by instilling in young people a love for the living theatre. From children come our high school actors, but better still, our high school audiences. All organizations of a community should unite to bring Children's Theatre to its boys and girls.

**WITH** Arena Staging: *Publicity, Promotion, Performance* Ted Skinner, Chairman, Department of Speech, Texas College of Arts and Industries, Kingsville, concludes his series of eight articles. We believe that his articles are a real contribution to the secondary schools, so much so that his series will be reprinted into pamphlet form over the summer months. We are grateful to Mr. Skinner that he has accepted our invitation to serve on our Board of Experts at our Silver Anniversary National Dramatic Arts Conference at IU this coming June.

**IT'S** graduation time for our hero and his dog Shep in Doris Marshall's last article of her series, *I Direct a Play*. Thus from entering high school at the opening of her series we have traveled the high school road through four years of drama and Thespians. Writing for our active student Thespians, now numbering over 22,000, Mrs. Marshall has caught their indomitable enthusiasm, their courage and their hopes. And so our hero and Shep face the Commencement of a new life.

**OUR** Silver Anniversary editorials are written this month by the two men most directly responsible for the founding of our society in 1929: Dr. Paul Opp of Fairmont State College, Fairmont, W. Va.; and Dr. Earl Blank of North-eastern College, Tahlequah, Oklahoma. To them came the inspiration for the need for our society twenty-five years ago. Its phenomenal growth from 71 affiliated schools to 1380 to date must indeed be most gratifying. We are proud to have them close our Silver Anniversary Celebration with their editorials in this issue of **DRAMATICS**.

**AS** our Silver Anniversary National Dramatic Arts Conference at Indiana University during the entire week of June 20 brings to a climactic close our celebration of 25 years of service to the secondary schools of the world, we feature in this last issue pictures of personnel who will take part in the week's program. In addition to our own Thespian Troupe participants, you will find pictured members of our Board of Experts, Indiana University Theatre personnel and two of our principal speakers. There really will be "more in '54!"

**DRAMATICS** wishes to express its appreciation to all our department editors for their excellent articles and pictures which appeared in all eight issues of this current school year: Paul Myers, for his coverage of Broadway's theatres and for his reviews of outstanding "movies"; Si Mills, for his informative material about TV and radio shows; Earl Blank, for his editing of reviews of plays presented by our own Thespian Troupes; and Willard Friederich, for his informative brief-viewing of new plays and books on theatre.

**WITH** this issue we conclude our 25th year of publishing your official organ, **DRAMATICS**, known in its earlier years as the **HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN**. This year has been a good year both in circulation and in paid advertising. Next October will come to you the first issue of our second 25 years. Your editor believes that greater achievements lie ahead.

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# As I See It . . .

## REGIONAL CONFERENCES EVERYWHERE!

To Roanoke, Virginia; Upper Darby, Pennsylvania; Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Helena, Montana; Indiana, Pennsylvania, traveled your National Secretary during the past six weeks to attend Thespian Regional Conferences. The programs were excellently planned and well executed and the attendance at each conference far exceeded that anticipated. What a thrilling experience it was for me to meet our student Thespians and faculty Sponsors in these states, to banquet with them, to dance with them, to discuss with them mutual problems! This I know: In whatever state I may be at the time, I find that the Thespian high school theatre IS good theatre. Would that I had more space to tell you about Children's Theatre play I saw at Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, the beautiful banquet and dance in Virginia, the four one-act plays in Iowa, the excellent Workshops at Indiana, Pennsylvania, and the superb production of *Mrs. McThing* in Montana! I am proud to be the National Secretary of this organization, for I have seen what it really can do for our affiliated high schools be they large or small.

Blandford Jennings, our National Director, reports that our Michigan State Conference was well-planned, well-executed and well attended. Jean Donahey, one of our National Senior Councilors, has only words of commendation for our New Jersey Regional Conference, and I have received several letters from our Sponsors in which they praised the fine program presented at our Oklahoma State Conference. From all reports our Oregon State Conference at the University of Oregon was tops. Our New England Conference held at Emerson College and our Northern Illinois Conference were, like all the others, milestones in our national progress.

To all our Regional Directors who throughout this year assumed the responsibility for these regional conferences your National Secretary is humbly grateful. I sincerely hope that these conferences have been so inspirational that there will be a demand for their repetition in the near future.

—O—

### CHILDREN'S THEATRE CONFERENCE

The 1954 Annual Meeting of the Children's Theatre Conference will be held at Michigan State College, East Lansing, on August 23-28. The program is designed to be of interest and profit to teachers of children's dramatics, recreation directors, community theatre leaders and workers in all phases of theatre for children. There will be workshop sessions, plays, puppet shows and movies during the evening hours. Preceding the five-day meeting will be a three-week Institute in children's dramatics, given by the faculty of Michigan State and visiting lecturers. This is a credit course and would be of interest to beginning directors as well as to those who wish to learn new ideas and developments in this fast-growing field.

—O—

### HERE IS A REAL OPPORTUNITY

Ohio University, Athens, will hold Workshops on *Radio* and *Debate* for high school students from June 21 to July 3; Workshop in *Dramatics* for high school teachers, June 28 to July 10; and the Ohio Valley Summer Theatre for college and high school students from June 21 to August 14. Here is a real opportunity for students and teachers to participate in summer theatre. Write to Claude E. Kantner, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, for more details.

Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, will again run its two-weeks' Summer Workshop in Speech-Drama-Radio for high school students. The dates are June 7-19, and total fees, including room and board, will be \$42.00. Need more be said?

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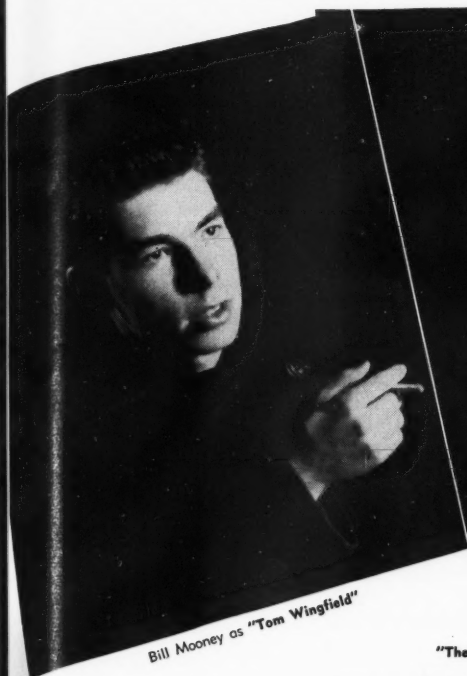
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Beth Cole as "Laura" and Ken Eaton as "Jim O'Connor"

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Anne Batts as "Amanda Wingfield"

### THE GLASS MENAGERIE

"Theatre Y," Thespian Troupe 345, Malvern, Ark., High School

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Members of Troupe 156 and Sponsor, Emily Mitchell, Revere, Mass., High School, who will conduct a panel concerning the questionnaires which were sent to all troupes this spring. (Photo by Arnold Zunick, member of Troupe 156.)

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Cast of **Claudia**, Indiana University Theatre, who will present an evening performance.



Formal Initiation Ceremony will be presented by Troupe 1241, Indian Hill High School, Cincinnati, Ohio, Zura Patrick, Sponsor.



Troupe 545, South Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Wash., will present a cutting from **January Thaw**. Doris Adley is Sponsor.



Troupe 101, Midwest City, Okla., High School, will present a cutting from **Father of the Bride**. Effie Carlisle is Sponsor.

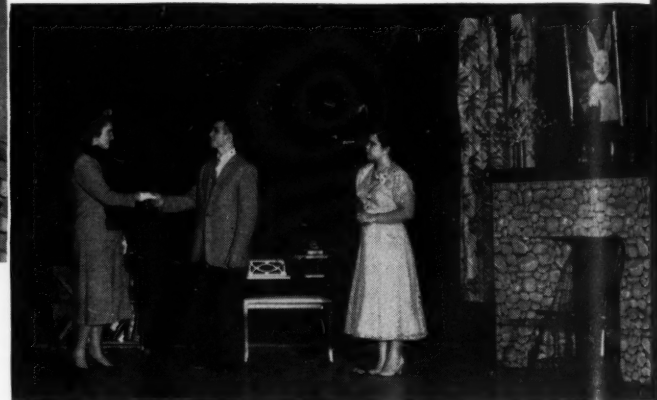


Troupe 185, Phenix City, Ala., High School, will present the one-act play, **The Pipes of Dunbar**. Mrs. W. O. Langley is Sponsor.

## ONE-ACT PLAYS



Troupe 115, Ceredo-Kenova High School, Kenova, W. Va., will present the one-act play, **Sunday's Child**. Nan S. Hutchison is Sponsor.



Troupe 254, B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass., will present a cutting from **Harvey**. Barbara Wellington is Sponsor.



Troupe 215, Stambaugh, Mich., High School, will present the one-act play, **The Wonder Hat**. Helen Dunham is Sponsor.



## ONE-ACT PLAYS READERS



Seymour Stern, Troupe 1277, Frederick, Md., High School, will present the reading, **Mama Spanks Me.**



Troupe 1126, Ursuline High School, Youngstown, Ohio, will present the one-act play, **Dust of the Road.** Sister Rosemary, O.S.U., is Sponsor.



Rosetta Hoyle, Troupe 1263, Enid, Okla., High School, will present the reading, **Bury the Dead.**



Marcia Damoose, Troupe 789, Ypsilanti, Mich., High School, will present the reading, **A Minuet.**



Troupe 503, John Harris High School, Harrisburg, Pa., will present the one-act play, **Jacob Comes Home.** Jeanne Lutz is Sponsor.



Ruby Joyce White, Troupe 1009, Peabody High School, Alexandria, La., will present the reading, **Junior Takes Up Dramatics.**



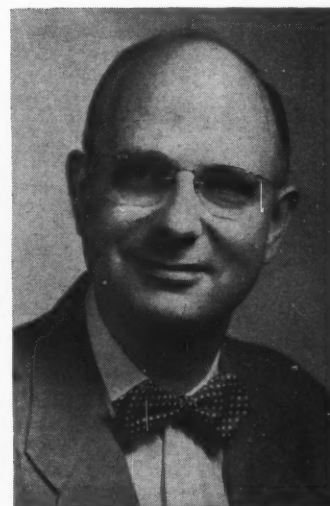
Willard Friederich, Marietta College, Marietta, Ohio.

## B O A R D O F



June Mitchell, Emerson College, Boston, Massachusetts.

## E X P E R T S



Ted Skinner, Texas College of Arts and Industries, Kingsville, Texas.



# W O R K S H O P S

Pat Feiser, Troupe 520, Wm. Penn High School, York, Pa., Chairman of her Troupe's Workshop, **Pageantry**, Margaretta Hallock, Sponsor.



Radio and TV Workshop will be conducted by Troupe 455, Benton Harbor, Mich., High School, Margaret Meyn, Sponsor.



Student Director's Workshop will be conducted by Troupe 364, Jamestown, N. Y., High School, Myrtle Paetznik, Sponsor.



Workshop for Choral Reading will be conducted by Troupe 246, Inkster, Mich., High School, Verla Coleman, Sponsor.



Advertising the Play Workshop will be conducted by Troupe 27, Morgantown, W. Va., High School, Dorothy Stone White, Sponsor.



Children's Theatre Workshop will be conducted by Troupe 1000, Upper Darby, Pa., Frieda Reed, Mazie Weil, Co-Sponsors.



Make-Up Workshop will be conducted by Troupe 1070, Columbian High School, Tiffin, Ohio, Mary Herron, Sponsor.

## W O R K S H O P S



Workshop for Assembly Programs will be conducted by Troupe 59, Danville, Ill., High School, Mary Miller, Sponsor.



Thespian Meetings Are Fun Workshop will be conducted by Troupe 933, Belleville, Kans., High School, Mrs. E. C. Houdek, Sponsor.



Front of the House Courtesies Workshop will be conducted by Troupe 786, Springfield, Ore., High School, Mabel Marie Ellefson, Sponsor.

### MADELYN PUGH

(Picture on Cover)

Miss Madelyn Pugh, born in Indianapolis, Indiana, is a graduate of Shortridge High School (Thespian Troupe 595) and of Indiana University. Her radio and TV career started as a continuity writer for station WIRE, Indianapolis, in 1942. She was a staff writer for both NBC and CBS, Hollywood, California, from 1943 until 1948 at which time she wrote scripts for the Steve Allen Show, **Couple Next Door** and **I Was There** — all on the Pacific network. Her first break came when she sold to "Columbia Workshop" her first network show, **It Shouldn't Happen to a Man**. From 1948 to 1951 she wrote for CBS radio network the script for **My Favorite Husband**, starring Lucille Ball and Richard Denning. From 1951 on, she with Bob Carroll, Jr., and Jess Oppenheimer, head-writer-producer, has been writing the script for the **I Love Lucy** TV show.

Miss Pugh was chosen "Headliner of the Year" (1953) by Theta Sigma Phi, journalistic honorary fraternity; was named "Woman of the Year" (1953) by Woodbury College, Los Angeles; and received the 1953 "Michael" award for the best written comedy show on TV.

## G U E S T S P E A K E R S

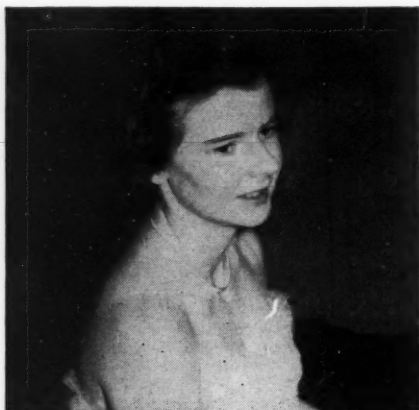


MARGO JONES

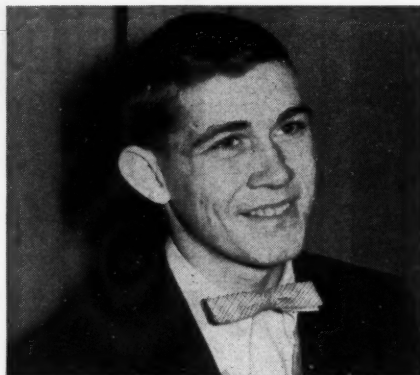
Distinguished theater director, author and lecturer, Margo Jones has founded a new kind of theatre in America, creating live drama entertainment in a region far removed from the New York theatre capital. She pioneered in founding a permanent professional repertory theatre dedicated to staging of new plays and classics. Her theatre in Dallas, Texas, is the only one of its kind in America and has set a pattern for such theatres in metropolitan cities over the nation. Hers was the first professional theatre to use arena staging. Recently she wrote a book relating to the history of her Dallas theatre titled **Theatre in the Round**.



## VARIETY SHOW



Kathy Rafferty, Pianist, Troupe 214,  
Carlisle, Pa., High School.



Bard Rupp, Vocalist, Troupe 214,  
Carlisle, Pa., High School.



Jackie Carter, Vocalist, Troupe 214,  
Carlisle, Pa., High School.



Sylvia Kreidler, Barbara Powell, Judy Williamson, Sharon McMullen,  
Carol Bahls, Jean Haskell and Carol Leverenz, Dancing Chorus,  
Troupe 59, Danville, Ill., High School.



Carol Faber, Troupe 455, Benton Har-  
bor, Mich., High School, Novelty Solo.



Ilene Smith and Bob Elston in a skit,  
**One World Alone**, Troupe 786, Spring-  
field, Ore., High School.



Nancy Spinelli, Vocalist, Troupe 156,  
Revere, Mass., High School.



Francene Rockwood and Paula Cas-  
teline, Troupe 156, Revere, Mass., High  
School, Vocal and Accordion Duet.

## VARIETY SHOW



Helen Kollas and George Touloumes,  
Dance Team, Troupe 214, Carlisle, Pa.,  
High School.



Deborah Gordon, Pres., Troupe 27,  
Morgantown, W. Va., High School,  
Dance Specialty.



Ardith Kelley, Troupe 933, Belleville,  
Kans., High School, Novelty Dance.



(Photo by Bruno of Hollywood, N.Y.C.)

Marla Joyce Schneider, Troupe 66,  
Lehman High School, Canton, Ohio,  
Novelty Dance.



Shirley Markle, Troupe 520, Wm.  
Penn Sr. High School, York, Pa.,  
Dancer.



Elaine Vovakis, Troupe 214, Carlisle,  
Pa., High School, Mandolin Solo.



Johnny Costopoulos, Dancer, Troupe  
214, Carlisle, Pa., High School.



Dance Team, Jerry Warner and Diedra  
Burandt, Troupe 933, Belleville, Kans.,  
High School.

## THE POWER of ORGANIZATION

By PAUL E. OPP

THE staging of a dramatic production is a demonstration of the power of organization, and often the quality of the production is in direct proportion to the efficiency of the organized effort put into it. It takes a good director, actors, and a production staff, smoothly working together, to achieve the best all-around results. That is organization, and any notable artistic accomplishment simply takes lots of it. So too is our organization, The National Thespians, a cooperative affair. Even today, our vitality and our secure national position are a result of the energy and talent of national officers and regional directors, troupe sponsors, and the officers of troupes and members of the individual troupes in high schools all across the nation and in several foreign countries.

It has been suggested that for this twenty-fifth anniversary I write something about the early days of the organization, and the days of its early heart-aches and struggles. This article would be very brief if it were devoted to struggles and hardships, for it seems to me that "Dame Fortune" was constrained to smile upon the inception and growth of the Thespians in a most positive fashion. One of the favorite quotations of the late Ernest Bavely was one from Victor Hugo, "Nothing is so powerful as an idea whose hour has come!" In 1929 the hour for the birth of the National Thespians had arrived, and behold the manner of its birth was in this fashion. There was Dr. Earl Blank, out in Casper, Wyoming, insisting that something must be done on a national honor society for high school boys and girls. Several other directors of dramatics were interested, and Ernest Bavely, my efficient secretary, also thought it a good idea — "an idea, whose hour had come."

The big problem was how could anyone be a man of action, and launch upon a project like the National Thespian Society when like most drama directors, I was terribly busy with five productions a year and a full teaching load. But *organization* and division of labor did the job! Ernest Bavely worked on the constitution, Ruby Koon and Harry Leeper on the heraldic designs, and I on the ceremonials and promotional literature. From the start we had the name, "Thespians," and we were quite sure that that was the name. This name had been at the top of the list since my first acquaintance with Earl Blank, who before his Casper position, had been director of the Thespians, the dramatic society of Iowa Wesleyan College. There was no debate on the matter of name; it had to be The National Thespians, and the magazine, "The High School Thespian"! Applications for troupe charters were already coming in as a result of the announcement of the launching of the new organization. When the list of the schools that were to be the charter members was closed, seventy-one high schools, representing twenty-six states, were eligible for charters. The printing had been completed before the close of the school year, and the supplies were distributed to the sponsors, who were able to confer membership upon the new Thespians before commencement. Harry Leeper and I had the honor of conferring membership in Troupes 2 and 3 of the two local high schools in a joint ceremony held on the stage of Fairmont State College in May, 1929.

Finally it is to be observed that The National Thespians did not make its appearance in 1929 as the result of any one individual's personal desire to promote something. Directors of secondary school dramatics badly felt the need for an organization to serve as a clearing house for ideas and to provide assistance with the complex problems of play production. The fact that DRAMATICS today has a monthly circulation of 24,000 copies, and utilizes on its staff the services of the outstanding authorities in the educational and professional theatre will give some idea of the extent and importance of gathering and disseminating information on current problems. As fast as directors and administrators learn of the services that the society renders so efficiently the number of schools, which now stands at 1,378, will continue the amazing growth enjoyed in the past, and what the size will be in the next five or ten years is anybody's guess. Whatever the growth, however, it is certain that students will take as great pride as ever in their achievement of Thespian membership, and directors will look upon the society as a substantial source of help and inspiration.

## PLANTING the SEED

By EARL W. BLANK

WHEN the subject of trials and tribulations was posed to me by Leon Miller, I thought: "I'll need more than the space allotted me in which to tell such a story." However, I find as I look back over these twenty-five years, that some of my pleasantest memories and closest friendships are intertwined with the organizing of the National Thespian Society.

Being a passionate believer in the value of dramatics as a basic skill in the development of the high school student—that it stimulates cooperation, discrimination, analysis; arouses the imagination, increases intelligence and industry while it develops personality, I sought for a more concrete motivating force in teaching.

In the Natrona County High School in Casper, Wyoming, twenty-five years ago while sitting at my desk during a free period and looking out my classroom windows at the mountains, I got the inspiration for this motivation, the Thespians. I asked myself the question: "Why shouldn't there be a dramatic organization on the high school level to function like the National Forensic League?"

Right then and there the seed for the National Thespian Society was germinated and I immediately posed the suggestion of such an organization to my good friend, Dr. Paul Opp of Fairmont State College, Fairmont, West Virginia. I even suggested some such name as the National High School Dramatic League. Dr. Opp responded very quickly to my suggestion and said that he would get the machinery underway for the formation of such a society, but thought naming it the National Thespian Society after the first actor, Thespis, was more effective.

He and his colleagues, Harry Leeper and Ernest Bavely, soon had printed material in the mails and the National Thespian Society was launched. By October, 1929, there were seventy-one troupes and the High School Thespian Magazine was initiated. The honor of having Troupe One went to Casper, Wyoming's, Natrona County High School, while the two Fairmont, West Virginia, High Schools came next in line. The honor of extending to me the national presidency was a real satisfaction and I shall always appreciate this gesture.

In the early days of the Society's life I moved to Eveleth, Minnesota. Here I saw rapid growth of both the troupes as well as the magazine. At first it was necessary to send much correspondence between Eveleth and Fairmont. Later it seemed urgent for Dr. Opp, Harry Leeper, Ernest Bavely, and me to get together and make further plans, which we did in Chicago. Out of this grew the idea for a national council and regional directors, as well as the need for a well-defined constitution and a national convention. It also was deemed urgent to have a full time executive secretary-treasurer. Mr. Bavely was persuaded to leave his teaching position in West Virginia and accept this position. Cincinnati seemed a centrally located city so there headquarters were set up.

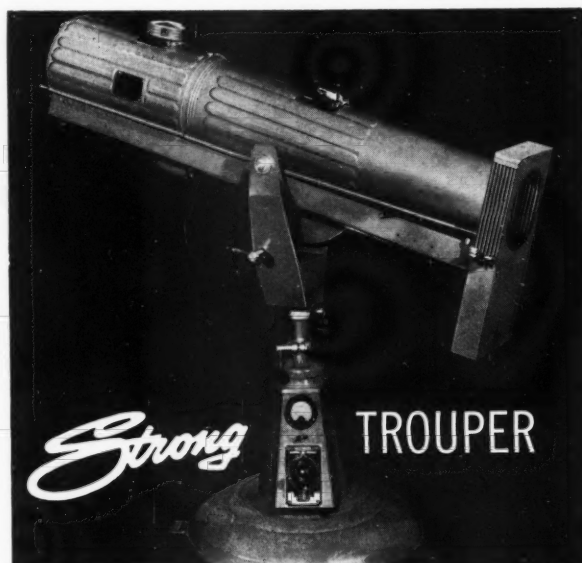
The society then passed into its vitally active stage. National conventions were regularly scheduled to meet with the other national speech organizations. The national council met and seriously worked on stabilizing the financial and cultural growth of the society. More space was added at the national headquarters. More services were given to teachers and students. All along the way the national council never wavered in its desire to serve honestly the high schools. Honors came the National Thespian Society's way. Festivals sponsored by the organization flourished. The magazine outgrew itself and was enlarged and renamed. Each individual step, such as the revision of the initiation ceremony, was a shared adventure. Every single development called for the scrutiny of the council, regional directors, and members. Never have I observed or participated in a finer demonstration of devoted teamwork.

The National Thespian Society's growth is testimony to the fact that everyone working toward one progressive and worthwhile goal is bound to secure results both phenomenally and educationally rewarding. The Silver Anniversary is the living testimony that in a short twenty-five years the National Thespians have demonstrated their faith constructively and that they have achieved a worthy objective.



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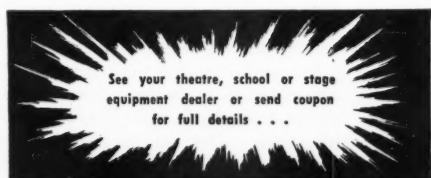
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# TWO FOR THE SHOW...

By LILLIAN DECKER MASTERS

"LOOK, mother, the pirates are going to kill Wendy! Why don't they call in the Marines?" This was a most audible and frantic comment from an entranced child in the audience at *Peter Pan*. Later, as the child audience spilled out of the theatre, you could overhear such reactions as "Gee, that was better than Mickey Mouse!" Or, "It's not a movie, Daddy, it's *real*!" Then there is always the tearful one who moans, "Why does it have to be over?" or the blissful one who sighs, "Let's come here every, every single day!"

Even the adult portion of the audience has a frank response. "You know, bringing the children is just an excuse. I love these plays." Or, "Maybe I just never grew up, but I haven't had such a nice afternoon in a long time." Even the school janitor has his comment, "Them kid shows is really good."

Here is an adventure in good theatre which we can all share.

In the nonprofessional field, high school and children's theatre are two of the most important and progressive tributaries to the mainstream of American theatre. There is no reason for competition between the two. The twain can meet and work together for a rich mutual experience. There can be a happy combination which results in the satisfaction of good theatre. High school with children's theatre can be an exciting adventure for all concerned, both in front and behind the footlights.

The teen-ager contempt for the small fry and the similar boredom of the grade schooler for the adolescent are mostly myths, kept alive primarily by the standard family or school farces, comic strips and movies which feature dissension of the two mostly as a comedy "gimmick." In real life the high school student and the child get along together very well, particularly in theatre. There they have a harmony, a common bond and a unity of purpose which result in a feeling of respect for each other.

Live drama for children is rare even now in most of the nonprofessional theatre areas. There are some excellent, well-established, operating children's theatres in some places, and in many places there are some valiant volunteer groups such as Junior Leagues or women's organizations which realize the need of real theatre for the movie and TV addicted young generation. There are a few professional touring companies bringing drama to children, and there are the too few high school and college and little theatre groups who attempt to incorporate in their seasons at least one or two plays for children.

But the effort is small compared to the need. It is that all-important high school theatre group which can do much to provide theatre for children, and at the

same time educate themselves, the community and an audience of both young and old.

Our own setup in Terre Haute with a Children's Theatre, which includes all the city grade schools, high schools and college people, has proved that a combination of high school and children's theatre can be ideal and workable. Children chosen from all of the city, county and parochial schools play the child roles with high school and college actors playing the adult parts. The result is a convincing, integrated and enjoyable performance for children and adults as well. The child audience does not believe in a Captain Hook played by a thirteen-year-old boy, nor will it accept a Heidi who is a curvy, mature girl. It must be the right person in the right role for the proper illusion. The child imagination is most elastic, but in the presentation of play characters, who to them, are real, there must be no incongruity. All this can be accomplished when high school and children's theatres work together.

Our years of working this combination of high school and child actors doing plays for the child audience have proved conclusively that they can work together ideally and with mutual benefits.

home to your mother." He made a dignified exit and the scene went on per script. After the performance, the high school Aladdin thanked the grade school beggar boy player with a real, man to man handshake—everything "even Stephen" except the size of the hands involved. They were working together, this seven-year-old and that seventeen-year-old.

Then there was that time in the production of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* when Cassim dashed to the dressing room for a quick repair job on his torn pantaloons. Suddenly the sound crew had that desperate, sinking feeling that the cue had come for Cassim's blood-curdling scream as the robbers quartered him inside the cave. No Cassim! But the scream came on cue, not from isolated Cassim in the dressing room, nor from a frantic sound crew member, but from a pint-sized fourth grader cast member, in one of the oil jars who had been watching, listening and who recognized the dilemma. His emergency scream went down in local backstage annals as the most heart-rending, spine-chilling thriller of screams. The new regard of cast members and crews, young and old, for this little trouper was something to behold.

When you see a high school actor putting makeup on a fellow player ten years his junior, and doing it as carefully as he would for himself; when you see a youngster throwing lines to an adult



The colorful *Circus Day* played for Terre Haute's child audience by a cast including actors from seven to seventeen.

We all remember that horrible moment in *Aladdin* when the leading character rushed in from his near fiasco with the magician in the cave and shouted, "Mother, the wonderful jewels I have brought you are . . .", and then he realized he had forgotten the all-important jewel bag! The momentary paralyzation was cut short when a seven-year-old bit player (whose biggest scene up to now had been a one-line speech in the market mob scene) trotted on with the bag of jewels in hand and calmly announced, "Aladdin, I found this in the street. You must have dropped it as you hurried

player in rehearsal and covering for mishaps; when you see adult and child players snuggled together in the green room reading comics during an offstage scene, or a high school girl meticulously mending a rowdy little girl's petticoat before her next scene, or a barely able to read youngster cueing the high school hero actor on lines behind scenes, or the child actor guarding a prop for a leading player, or both high school and child players assisting with quick scene changes, or best of all when you see the excited audience bursting out of the theatre still tingling over the play, then you have

JUST OFF THE PRESS

## TWENTY-ONE YEARS WITH CHILDREN'S THEATRE

by CHARLOTTE B. CHORPENNING

FOREWORD BY MAURICE GNESIN

Written in autobiographical form, and characteristically sub-titled "What the Children Taught Me," this book is not divided neatly and patly into definite chapters. As Mrs. Chorpenning says — "Things just do not happen in chronological order." Everything is inseparably linked and intertwined and interdependent, and the gathered wisdom of the years flows from page to page, in her inimitable narrative style.

Nevertheless, this book delves deeply into the following subjects, gay and meaningful with anecdote, and embellished with pictures:

How the Children Taught Me

Child Audience Analysis

How I Used What the Children Taught Me

Writing for Children's Theatre, involving Directing, Acting, Staging

\$3.50 a copy

## THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PRESS

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ANCHORAGE, KENTUCKY

seen the results of real working together in theatre.

The benefits of this adventure in theatre for high school and children's theatre are many, and are distributed to both groups participating.

The high school which includes at least one play a season for children, or the children's theatre which opens its cast and crews to high school people, finds that both are building a future adult audience. Going to the theatre can become a habit. Well-done plays for children instill this habit. There is no greater reward, nor a feeling of effectiveness better expressed than that uninhibited chorus of "oh's and ah's," as house lights dim and the curtain goes up on a colorful play for children. This responsive young audience is getting good theatre, and it is being indoctrinated to become an intelligent and appreciative audience of tomorrow.

While this theatre audience is being developed, more important perhaps is that growing group of oncoming actors who are being trained. The child actor, having had experience in playing children's theatre, becomes a prospective Thespian asset for the adult theatre. Playing with high school actors and playing with the "ensemble" idea will stand the child actor in good stead when he arrives at adult theatre. At the same time, the high school actor is giving and receiving experience performing in the most demanding situation to be found in theatre.

This is the type of training the high school actor needs. Children's plays have roles that fit the talents and abilities of the high school player. Too often high school actors are miscast in warmed over Broadway fare and are forced to try to delineate mature and intricate characters

audience demands that the actor give broad characterization and clear projection. The child audience, while not asking absolute realism, expects complete illusion. It will accept anything that is sincere and not condescending. Children can spot over-acting or false exaggeration



**Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp** combined a cast of high school and college players in the adult roles with junior high and grade school youngsters in supporting roles.

entirely foreign to their age and imagination. But the children's play offers them the opportunity to create within the range of their understanding.

Playing for the child audience is a challenge. Convincing the child audience is a tough assignment. There is no more discerning audience than the critical child audience, nor, on the other hand, is there a more intense, sincere and responsive one. Children can evaluate a production quickly and coldly, with immediate and positive reactions. The child

immediately, and at the same time they react just as quickly to artistic conviction. Those who have played for the child audience may have had bitter experiences. (Fortunately most children's plays avoid love scenes which invariably draw derisive howls or whistles from the children.) If a cast does not play with energy and sincerity, the audience attention is lost, and children are quick to demonstrate their restlessness. Programs may become paper airplanes aimed at the

(Continued on page 32)



# I DIRECT A PLAY

By DORIS MARSOLAIS MARSHALL

THE Beloved B was a-glow on the Hill,  
and Strident young voices of the underclassmen  
were raised in the reverent, memorable  
melody,

AULD LANG SYNE, as we, the class of '54,  
stood on the lawn of Belaire High in Cap 'n  
gown,  
the moved-over tassel dancing crazily,  
dizzily in  
front of tear-dimmed eyes . . .

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot  
'n never brot to mind" . . .  
They'll be forgotten momentarily, —  
Individually forgotten

In Everyday Forgetfulness!  
For even now they are Memory!  
They are our Youth, not lost, no!  
Because the Thoughts of Youth are long, long  
Thoughts —

\* \* \*

We, my Master and I, stood slightly  
apart, but we were still a part of this last  
drama of High School Life!

The school was now dark. The last  
light in our auditorium had been shut off  
by our faithful custodian, and our many  
friends and relatives (who had been to  
the exercises, and who had been seeing  
us thru the trials and tribulations of  
measles, mumps, Kindergarten, skinned-  
knees, hurt-feelings, dirty ears, and pup-  
py-love) had left the room that was near  
and dear to us, and we were now on our  
own!

The school dark? It would never be  
dark in our memories!

\* \* \*

The mirror-like front door windows  
would always reflect the happy faces of  
radiant Youth! Would always reflect:

The Shyness of the Frosh,  
The Awareness of the Soph,  
The Sophistication of the Junior  
and the Uncertainty of  
the Senior! \* \* \*

Our Senior year had been filled with  
feverish activity,  
with honor, with glory and with  
Work —  
For wherever there is Theatre  
there is Work!  
Satisfying Work,  
Creative Work,  
Learning and  
Useful Work!

The hand of God was steady when He  
created — Work — and His Heart was  
sure when He created — Theatre!

It's been some months since we'd cele-  
brated our Silver Anniversaries —

More than a Year!

So much happened in our Senior Year  
that we've neglected our Diary —

As you've probably guessed Master  
Made *All State* as Center (he attributes,  
however, his athletic accomplishments to  
his fine, understanding Coach!

That Coach was more than a Coach,  
he was, first, a man and a teacher who  
taught — what's more important —

The *Fundamentals* of Life!  
Boys' State, as Governor, had filled  
part of a wonderful summer —

The Veterans of Foreign Wars' Essay  
Contest had brought us fame as  
writers — (Indeed I did help, for I carried  
the winning Essay to the Commander  
and received a pat on my thatched roof!)

As Senior Class President We had led  
the Grand March at the Senior Serenade  
Ball. Bette Belle had come home from  
*State* for the occasion and, I am glad to  
report, she was still her same old, sweet  
self! The freckles were still star-polished  
and her eyes cute and merry. She was  
just a shade more sophisticated — but,  
mind you, just a shade! Just enuf to meet  
the basic requirements of approaching  
Womanhood! Masks too had acquired  
more maturity, dignity and Canine-  
womanhood, but

More of this later.

\* \* \*

A Great decision had faced us in Early  
Spring: a decision had to be made — a  
choice of the mile run — or  
To Direct a play! a play for the State  
Spring Festival —

Now, to you, that May have seemed as  
no decision at all!

Naturally following in  
the hysteria of the trend  
of the Times — No course  
was more apparent —  
Hail, the Conquering Hero  
By more — than popular  
Acclaim!

"Hurrah! Rah, Rah, Rah —  
Here he comes!"  
in the Blue and Gold  
of his school and streaked

like lightning o'er the  
finish line and won the  
meet for old Belaire Hi!

He owed it to his Alma Mater!

He owed his young, growing, fighting  
heart, his long, lithe limbs —  
His spirit and his

FULL cooperation —  
Pressure from here, — there and down-  
town —

But, also, he owed Something to his own  
Future — his own

Conscience — his own way of life —  
and his own choice —

It was apparent that this was one time  
both Gods could not be served.  
What to do —

Couldn't be called a quitter — a sissy!  
But — Could he rightfully go against  
the dictates of his heart? —

As Fate ruled the Theatre  
of the Greeks — so it  
came to the rescue  
of our Modern  
Young Thespian. His

Choice of choices had been incidentally,  
and accidentally made for him — a pulled  
tendon in Early work-outs had ruled him  
"invaluable" to our short Track Season! —

So, in the wise words of the Chinese,  
We'd Saved Face!

and could direct with Grace

A student produced Show!  
What a fitting Climax to four years of  
faithful Service  
to the Art of the Theatre —

However, we were a bit disturbed with  
our assignment for we had read Early  
pages in John Gassner's *Producing the  
Play* in which he had stated that a direc-  
tor should not be creative, but purely  
interpretative, and that his work should  
be excellent only in so far as it is un-  
obtrusive and that in the ideal theatre a  
director should not exist at all!

And what's more, this Eminent Man  
of Our Modern Theatre went on to say  
that if the playwrights turned out nothing  
but completely stageworthy plays, and if  
all actors had the intelligence, the integ-  
rity and skill to work together and inter-  
pret these plays perfectly the director  
would have no function to perform —

(Continued on page 34)



Make Room for Rodney, Troupe 1286, Trumansburg, N. Y., High School,  
Robert E. Timerson, Sponsor.

# Arena Staging: PUBLICITY, PROMOTION, PERFORMANCE

By TED SKINNER

**B**ECAUSE the director's time is occupied with rehearsing the play, arranging for the necessary properties, planning the make-up and costuming, as well as working out essential lighting details, he is apt to neglect two highly important jobs of letting the public know about the forthcoming production and taking care of the audiences when they arrive. Unless the show is publicly sold, the time and energy spent in producing it is a wasted effort, for who wants to perform before an empty or half-filled arena circle? As first impressions really count, how your audience is greeted and ushered to their seats must not be taken for granted.

## Publicity and Promotion

**Newspaper stories.** The first story very likely will announce the play selected for



Dyeing excelsior to make "grass" and a "hedge" for *Annie Get Your Gun*, Troupe 948, Shawnee, Okla., High School, Norene Tower, Sponsor.

production, give a brief account of its type and theme, and state the time, place, and instructions concerning try-outs. Following stories will release the cast, tell of progress of rehearsals, feature certain members of the cast, deal with arena staging techniques, cover technical aspects of the play, announce the opening of ticket sales, and in general lead up to the big spread before the opening performance. Included in all stories should be information as to *what, who, when, where, and how much*. Work this information into the lead paragraph. Editors frequently find it necessary to trim stories, but they will generally leave a well written lead paragraph intact.

Newspapers in which to place stories, in addition to the school paper, are the local community papers, nearby community papers, and the nearest large metropolitan publications. It isn't so difficult as sometimes thought to place stories in the larger papers.

Along with the newspaper stories, arrange to send pictures of rehearsal shots, technical angles, as well as characters in

costume. Be sure that pictures are well defined and on glossy paper.

**Radio publicity.** Supply the radio stations with news stories as well as copy for spot announcements. Check the possibility of getting some *plugs* on commercial programs of the "local news" variety. Find out if there isn't a program on which the director, technical director, or members of the cast might be interviewed. Before doing any scenes from the play over radio, be certain to make proper arrangements with the play publishers.

**Presentation of scenes.** The arena production, because of the absence of scenery, lends itself particularly to this type of promotion. Last year we presented a scene from *The Silver Whistle* before a service club luncheon meeting. The tables were arranged in a rectangle with openings at the four corners. A week prior to our recent production of *Blithe Spirit*, a portion of the play was given before a meeting of the local chapter of the American Association of University Women held in our theatre. Most of the members later attended the play and brought guests with them. Scenes from our latest arena production, *Night Must Fall*, were given before an audience of Saturday classes made up of teachers from nearby towns. Not only did many return to see the play, but they also helped us advertise it among their friends.

**Use of a sound truck.** Coverage of the town, as well as possibly nearby communities, with announcements about the play from a sound truck is an effective means of bringing the production to the attention of the general public. A novel approach will always secure more attention. For a recent production, we mounted a P. A. system on a Model T Ford to tour the town. In using this method, be sure that you are not violating any city ordinance.

**Posters and handbills.** Both commercially printed posters and original ones made by students with artistic ability may be utilized. Posters must be begun sufficiently in advance so that they may be placed in strategic locations long enough before the performance dates to accomplish their purpose. Handbills are inexpensive and especially effective if ordered in assorted colors. They make for colorful and attention getting streamers when hung across corridors in buildings. Handbills are easily mailed out, may be placed in automobiles, or distributed to homes. Always check local ordinances regulating such distribution.

**Cast picture displays.** Lobby displays featuring members of the cast, preferably in character, make for an effective means of advertising and lend a nice touch to the performance nights.

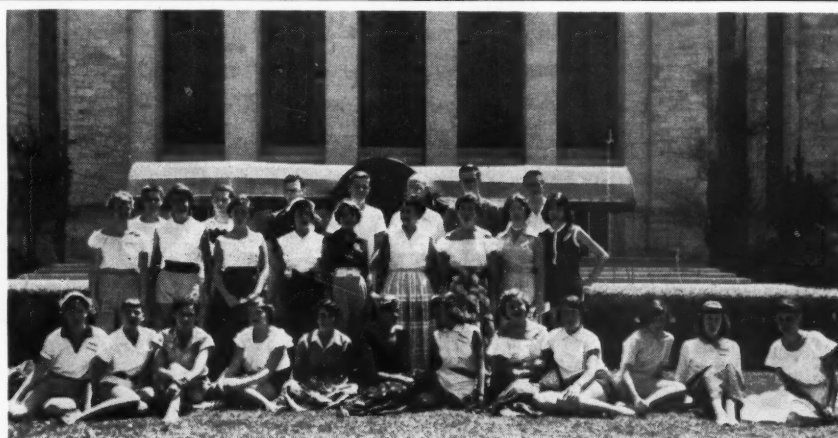
**Programs.** A detail often neglected in the planning is the play program. My preference is a four-page paper *printed* program without advertising, but it is possible to produce an attractive mimeographed program. The copy for the program must be submitted to the printer so he can furnish proof, which should be carefully checked. By all means spell all names correctly and see that no names are omitted.

**Tickets.** Another task that must be attended to early is the ordering of the tickets. If reserved seat tickets are used, a seating chart of the auditorium together with information as to the production, time, place, date, and price must be supplied to the printer. A different ticket color should be used for each performance to reduce the chances of error.

## Performance

The importance of establishing the *illusion of theatre* has been emphasized previously in articles dealing with housing, lighting, properties, costuming, make-up, directing, and acting. But it is with the actual performance that the true test comes. An audience can make or break a performance and it is my con-

(Continued on page 33)



Troupe 322, Clayton, Mo., High School, Blandford Jennings, Sponsor, in front of University Theatre Building, Bloomington, Indiana, at 4th National Dramatic Arts Conference.

# **G**RAMERCY GHOST

A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY

LIFE WITH FATHER

THE CURIOUS SAVAGE

FATHER OF THE BRIDE

CUCKOOS ON THE HEARTH

SORRY, WRONG NUMBER

THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER

RAMSHACKLE INN

DEAR RUTH

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YEARS AGO

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE

JUNIOR MISS

MR. BARRY'S ETCHINGS

STAGE DOOR



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Photo by Eileen Darby — Graphic House

A charming young girl comes to live in the household of an elderly priest. She has been brought there by her aunt, the priest's housekeeper. Jenny, 18, is the precise opposite of the kind of smart sophisticated young miss that puzzles and exasperates Father Moynihan. The plot is concerned with the priest's clumsy endeavors to make Jenny attractive to the boys. Studying feminine magazines and getting pointers on feminine psychology and new fashions, he is so successful that he nearly overplays his hand. A romance runs through the play, which ends in the engagement of Jenny to an attractive, somewhat older man who, trying to be fair and give Jenny a chance to meet eligible youngsters, almost loses her. But this man had been Jenny's choice from the first. Her consenting to go out with an amusing but over-enthusiastic follower of jive, has been in the line of duty, and the youth's amusing antics end up by boring her. The play is made doubly amusing by several young girls and the young boy above mentioned, all of whom manage to make Jenny "hep." Or rather, so they think, since Jenny remains to the end a simple and attractive girl, and her union with the man she loves is a proper solution to all the plots and plans of the various characters.

## DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, Inc.

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## Studio One

Columbia Broadcasting System

**STUDIO ONE** has not come by its reputation as top-flight television fare without a full quota of mass ingenuity. Each full-hour presentation represents the concentrated effort of some 160 technicians, artists and actors.

For its principal roles, *Studio One* depends pretty much on its own talent discoveries, only infrequently calling on big names as guests. Among *Studio One* finds are Charlton Heston, now a movie star; Mary Sinclair, recently signed to a 7-year film contract, and Felicia Montealegre.

Two or three weeks ahead of each performance, Richard Rychtarik, senior scenic designer, completes his basic floor plans of all sets to be used. As each unit is completed, the set painters take over. They mix and apply colors precisely as specified. Water paint is used to finish

the "flats," because of the speed with which sets must be made ready for television.

While the sets are being prepared, a costume designer is hard at work on her vital phase of the production. Actors make scheduled appearances for fittings, with the designer's professional eye following each performer's costume through its final alteration and approval. She too must be ever alert to color for its effect on the camera.

In the televised drama the play plot is rivalled in importance only by the light plot, a vastly complicated diagram of the entire studio area. Under the supervision of a lighting director three electricians prepare the complex lights for their all-important assignments in the drama — to simulate night or day, indoors or outdoors, dark or moonlight, fair weather or stormy, as script demands. In a room adjoining the main studio, meanwhile, the head of the Record Library is choosing special background music from thousands of records.

On the day of the show, for the first time, all these far-flung and separate activities merge. The sets are in place, the lights are ready to come on. The studio is alive with actors, camera-men, boom



New and retiring champions meet . . . Diahann Carroll, young blues singer (left), congratulates the dance couple, Norton and Patricia, who defeated her on DuMont's **Chance of a Lifetime**. Dennis James is emcee of the popular series.

handlers, sound experts, electricians, stage hands, make-up artists, wardrobe supervisors and floor managers. All are ready for their individual assignments, all aware of their specific places in the pattern, all sensitive to the delicate teamwork which must begin at 10 p. m., when the director says, "Hit it!" In a split second *Studio One* is on the air.

## Chance of a Lifetime

Dumont Television Network

Over the years shows displaying new talent have undergone many changes. No longer is there a hook for pulling unsatisfactory contestants as in the early 1900's. There isn't any gong such as was used by Major Bowes in the '30's. Now contestants are auditioned youngsters who have appeared professionally. *Chance of a Lifetime*, with Dennis James doing a good job of presiding, is an example of the new trend. It is audience reaction that chooses the winner, measurement of applause being made by a specially designed meter that is not influenced by whistles, shouts, or any sound other than clapping.

## Camera Three

WCBS-TV (New York)

Additional proof that educational television can be "a treat instead of a treatment" is seen on a program named *Camera Three*, done locally by the above station in cooperation with the University of the State of New York. Though presented on a local basis the program has been attracting attention throughout the nation. It is an example of a presentation of captivating material on a small budget. The trick is in knowing how. Guests are limited to three. Sets are non-existent. Maps and drawings are used frequently. There are many "breaks" in discussion while a reader unseen by the viewer, and with a most compelling voice, reads a passage from a standard work relative to the subject at hand. While he does this the viewer is shown movies or stills dealing with the discussion. This excellent series should be a pilot for many others across the country.



Architect Danforth Toan, anthropology professor John Landgraf of New York University and moderator James Macandrew discuss the development of cities during a broadcast of WCBS-TV's **Camera Three**.



Realism is the keynote for any *Studio One* production on CBS Television. Here a formal dinner — complete to the proper place settings — is held in a simulated New York mansion during a scene from **I Am Jonathan Scrivener**.



By SI MILLS

## Big Story

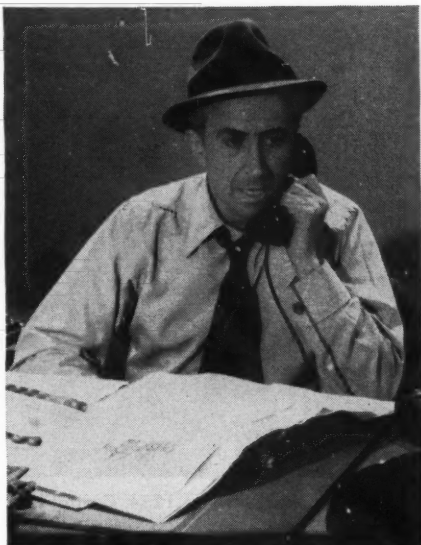
National Broadcasting Company

**N**OT long ago a 15-year-old boy from a small town in Missouri hitch-hiked all the way to Tulsa, Oklahoma. He walked into the city room of the **TULSA TRIBUNE** and asked to see the city editor. His reason: "I want to shake hands with the *Big Story* winners on the **TULSA TRIBUNE**."

Literally hundreds of authentic experiences of newsmen and women throughout the country have been brought before the public over NBC radio and TV since this program first went on the air in the Spring of 1947.

Producer Bernard J. Procktor first was inspired to work out a series along this line back in 1945 when he became interested in the experience of Jimmy McQuire, a Chicago Times reporter. McQuire, working with his city editor, had vindicated a man unjustly convicted of having murdered a policeman.

Procktor spent a year gathering data for his initial *Big Story*. Now he maintains a large research staff to read about



Newsman Walter Winchell, portrayed by actor George Petrie, works with the FBI in the capture of a public enemy in *The Big Story*.

100 newspapers weekly. They find news stories which present possibilities for the program, then check and re-check every aspect of each case. This takes half a year, on the whole, since many of these true stories took place some time ago and the persons concerned then have to be found and interviewed, the resulting data sifted and verified.

Cases have come from the biggest cities and the smallest towns and from reporters of all ages. Many of the newsmen and women are listed in "Who's Who," have won Pulitzer prizes for journalism, Sigma Delta Chi awards and Neiman fellowships.

There is no likelihood that *Big Story* ever will run out of stirring, dramatic, authentic material it handles so well since more good newspapermen are developing every day.

## Amos 'n' Andy

Columbia Broadcasting System

Twenty-six years ago Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll stepped up to a primitive radio microphone and began the most fabulous career in the history of broadcasting. It would be as hard to find a person in the nation who has never heard of *Amos 'n' Andy* as it would to find a school boy who has never heard the George Washington cherry tree story.

Their radio success was not only immediate; it was sustained. Programs by the dozen, involving some of the top talents in show business, have come and gone. *Amos 'n' Andy* today attract more listeners than ever.

On March 19, 1928, when the first show was broadcast, the "studio" was just a room; sound-proofing and acoustics were almost non-existent; the microphone would make a present-day engineer shudder; there were few stations, only a tiny fraction of today's number of receiving sets, very few sponsors and no networks.

Most performers were unpaid and pay was very small for the lucky few who got anything at all.

Gosden and Correll pioneered the use of electrical transcriptions, to record their show and replay it. They established a "network" of their own by the use of transcriptions, recorded in advance and shipped to stations from the Pacific Coast to Pittsburgh, to be broadcast at the same time as the script was done "live" from Chicago. They went coast-to-coast as a live show six nights a week in August, 1929, as the first nightly "strip" continuity broadcast. Most of all, their phenomenal popularity in the late twenties and early thirties single-handedly gave broadcasting the great stimulus it needed to put a radio in every home and establish the industry as one of the major influences in American life.

Gosden plays the beloved Amos, the roguish George ("Kingfish") Stevens and sleepy, slowpoke Lightnin'. Correll is the naive, eternally romantic Andrew H. (for Hogg) Brown and the would-be-dignified Henry Van Porter. Ernestine Wade plays the Kingfish's henpecking wife Sapphire. Lou Lubin is the stuttering barber Shorty, and Johnny Lee is the conniving lawyer Calhoun.

A year ago a story got out that they were thinking of retiring. It was front page news across the nation. The great news syndicates leaped on the story. Magazines quickly assigned writers to look into the rumored retirement. "Don't



Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll, the airwaves' beloved comedy team of *Amos 'n' Andy*.

Go, Boys," one columnist began his nostalgic article. Leading newspapers wrote editorials about Amos 'n' Andy's effect on American life over the past quarter-century.

After the newspapers carried their stories, hundreds of telephone calls, thousands of letters and telegrams poured in. Gosden and Correll were overwhelmed. But they aren't going to retire. Not while they can still talk and people can still listen.

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## GUEST IN THE HOUSE

Central High School, Muskogee, Okla.

**A**LTHOUGH Hagar Wilde and Dale Eunson's comedy drama, *Guest in the House*, is usually not considered by high school directors because of many so-called "adult" aspects of the three-act play, the Muskogee Central High School troupe found it exceedingly easy to adapt it to its high school audience.

The story concerns a successful New York illustrator who works with his wise-cracking model, but adapts his life to his lovely wife and bumptious eight-year-old daughter. Into this happy home, by invitation, comes a sweet face guest named Evelyn, who appeals to the protective instincts of both men and women. However, it soon becomes apparent that she is selfish, conniving and generally cruel. She attempts to disrupt the happy marriage of the illustrator and his wife, and makes a hypochondriac out of their young daughter.

This troupe found it necessary to edit the lines of the model and to tone down the lines of the illustrator. However, this play can be made easily presentable without damaging any of the farce or shrill tragedy which is found in the story. It is produced with one setting and with moderate cost. Its cast of six men and eight women makes a good workable group for high school shows.

J. W. PATTERSON, Director,  
Troupe 1234.



*Guest in the House*, Troupe 1234, Central High School, Muskogee, Okla., J. W. Patterson, Director.

## THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER

White River High School, Enumclaw, Wash.

**T**WENTY-SIX boys and eighteen girls were eager to play roles in the senior play, thirty-six of the forty-four totally inexperienced. But twenty-six boys — an incredible number — had answered the call.

The boys showed considerable diversity of character. Among the girls were several who could be trained to play sophisticated roles. Could we do *The Man Who Came to Dinner*?

Perhaps — if the play could be shortened, and if considerably more of the sex, vulgarity, and drinking than that suggested by the author could be eliminated without destroying the qualities that originally made the play a hit. Finally, could the makings of a Whiteside be discerned among our aspiring twenty-six males?

The staging would present no difficulties.



Slashing of the text began. Long speeches were cut out. The convicts went unmentioned, scene one ending with the presentation of Roach City. Christmas Eve retained somewhat more of its sanctity. Beverly's sexy discourse came out. Bert did not get drunk.

Next, we found Whiteside. Assets: personality, mobile countenance, good voice. Liabilities: No experience, undependability, scholastic lethargy. Net results: A superb Whiteside.

Had we cut too much from the original text?

"Definitely not," answered those who had seen other productions, "you gave an excellent performance."

LELA POSTLER, Sponsor,  
Troupe 1194.

## I REMEMBER MAMA

Amherst, Ohio, High School

**"H**EARTWARMING" is the exact word to describe Van Druten's Norwegian-American comedy, *I Remember Mama*. It is a play that must be done when you have the right cast. Last year was the year for Thespian Troupe 730. We had an understanding Mama, a terrifying Uncle Chris, a lovely Katrin, and all the rest down to Dagmar and "Uncle Elizabeth," the cat.

Staging the play in our gymnasium-auditorium was fairly simple. For the Hansen living room, block design wall paper furnished an appropriate background. A tall antique cupboard, Hardanger covers, an embroidered coat-of-arms, and a Norwegian table flag were

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*The Man Who Came to Dinner*, Troupe 1194, White River High School, Enumclaw, Wash., Lela Postler, Sponsor.

**PYGMALION**  
I REMEMBER MAMA  
GUEST IN THE HOUSE  
THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER

valuable properties for the creation of atmosphere.

For the side areas we used library tables. The front and side gymnasium doors served very well for street entrances and exits.

Our greatest difficulty we encountered was achieving a smooth continuity. Frequent shifting of action from one area to another kept the stage crews in constant confusion. Finally we hit upon the idea of dividing long sheets of paper into three columns, in which we sketched the floor plan of each scene as it came, numbering it in the left margin. Copies carried individual instructions with cues for each crew.

The play was regarded as delightful by both students and adults. The final triumph of our production, however, was achieved when we knew that our three Norwegian first-night guests had enjoyed the performance thoroughly and given it their complete approval.

MARGARET R. EGELAND, Sponsor,  
Troupe 730.

**PYGMALION**

Cleveland Heights, Ohio, High School

THE famous wit of George Bernard Shaw and the habits and eccentricities of different classes of Londoners combine to make one of the most delightful plays of all time. Producing *Pygmalion* is a challenge which many high school groups should attempt to meet. Our group was excited from the beginning about presenting such a difficult play. Any qualms we might have had were dispelled immediately by the enthusiastic response of the faculty and student body to our choice.



*Pygmalion*, Troupe 410, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, High School, Dina Rees Evans, Sponsor.

Shaw's subtle humor and not-so-subtle characterizations are delightful to produce. *Pygmalion* contains nothing objectionable and in many cases we found faculty members to be our most enthusiastic supporters.

The roles offer great variety of opportunities for characterization. The parts are not hard to cast, and although they require considerable research for the correct accent, they are fun to portray.

A special prevue performance was given for English classes to arouse interest in the play. It brought much favorable word-of-mouth comment which raised audience attendance at the subsequent performances.

*Pygmalion* was well received by school and community. Everyone who witnessed our production was gratified that a high school group should undertake to produce this play. Those of us who were in it, and those who saw it are glad we did.

BONNIE KOHN, *Thespian*,  
Troupe 410.

*Pygmalion*, Baker's Plays, Boston.  
*Guest in the House*, Samuel French, Inc.,  
New York City.  
*I Remember Mama, The Man Who Came to Dinner*, Dramatists Play Service, Inc.,  
New York City.



*I Remember Mama*, Troupe 730, Amherst, Ohio, High School, Margaret R. Egeland, Sponsor.

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By Ayn Rand. Courtroom scene. Was Bjorne Faulkner killed on the night of January 16th, or is he still alive when Karen Andre is put on trial for his murder? Only the jury, selected from the audience, can supply the answer and determine the ending of this popular and successful play. For 10W, 11M. Books, 90¢. Director's Manuscript. Royalty, \$25.

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By Jane Hinton. One set. The kind-hearted MacGregors, proprietors of an East Side funeral parlor, find themselves mixed up in a murder when a wealthy man comes to them to order his own funeral and dies on their doorstep. 6W, 7M. Books, 90¢. Director's Manuscript. Royalty, \$25.

**THE CALL OF THE BANSHEE**

By W. D. Hepenstall and Ralph Cullinan. One set. One night bedlam breaks loose, and mysterious deaths occur, in the "quiet" old house in which Peter Adair lives with a hypnotist and his Indian servant. The plot is puzzling, the solution is logical and the situation well seasoned with laughter. 7W, 8M. Books, 90¢. Director's Manuscript. Royalty, \$25.

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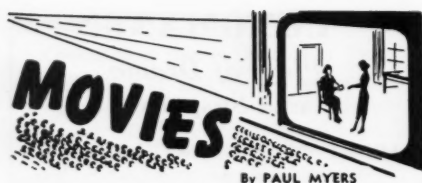
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ONE of the most interesting experiences of recent filmgoing (and one that should have considerable effect upon motion picture exhibition) was the demonstration of Superscope. This is a system invented by Joseph and Irving Tushinsky by which any theatre can show any of the several wide-screen process films. It is therefore of great importance to the film exhibitor. It is of value too to the motion picture producers because it does not diminish the 18,000 possible theatres in the United States and Canada which can present a given picture.

At the demonstration of the process sections of various films were shown to illustrate how well Superscope serves in all instances. The Nutcracker Suite sequence from Walt Disney's *Fantasia* was screened. Then followed a bit of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's Cinemascope production, *The Knights of the Round Table*. Following the exploits of Arthur's knights, we were shown short cuttings from R.K.O.'s *Susan Slept Here*, *The Big Rainbow* and *Son of Sinbad*; Benedict Bogeaus' *Silver Lode* and United Artists' *Vera Cruz* — a new Gary Cooper film. In each case the process seemed to present the film beautifully. According to the inventors, R.K.O. is already producing Superscope pictures and several other companies are negotiating for the process. "But no matter what ratio the industry decides to standardize," they add, "with Superscope the exhibitor is ready."

Mickey Spillane has been enjoying phenomenal popularity in the films, on radio and television. The newest of his tales to reach the screen is *The Long Wait*, a Parklane production released through United Artists. It is not quite so bloody a tale as some of the preceding Spillane thrillers. Anthony Quinn, who gives a very sensitive performance, plays an ex-convict who is suffering from amnesia. He had been involved in a smash-up in a truck in which he had hitched a ride. In the fire which ensued all of his papers are burned and he has no inkling of his identity until a fellow-worker in the oil-fields gives him a portrait of himself from a photographer in a town named Lynccastle. Quinn decides to make his way to Lynccastle and try to find himself. The remainder of the film shows how he clears himself of a supposed crime and brings the true malefactors to justice.

There are fisticuffs a-plenty in *The Long Wait* and gun-shot but there is also more characterization and deeper motivation than in other Spillane adaptations. Credit for this must go to Alan Green



Steve Cochran and Anne Baxter in *Carnival Story*.

and Lesser Samuels, the authors of the screenplay; to the director, Victor Daville and to the cast. Anthony Quinn is fine and he is ably supported by Charles Coburn, Peggie Castle and Gene Evans.

*Carnival Story*, an R.K.O. release, is a rather disappointing film. The setting is one that is fraught with dramatic possibilities, but very few of these are explored. Can one imagine a small American carnival troupe in present-day Munich? The milieu and the locale — even without the addition of plot — offer tremendous possibilities. Few of our present cities can offer more drama than Munich, and a traveling carnival has always seemed a perfect setting for skull-duggery. *Carnival Story*, however, is a rather routine drama of minor passion which never seems to take on the necessary quality of humanity. Anne Baxter and Steve Cochran play the leading roles in the film. *Carnival Story* has been directed by Kurt Neumann.

The Italian Film Export Company has brought over *Sensualita*. This film is set



Anne Baxter, Steve Cochran and Lyle Boettger in another scene from *Carnival Story*. (RKO Pictures)

in the wheat fields of the Po Valley and has been heralded as a successor to *Bitter Rice*. There are some very interesting sections of the film — notably those filmed in a displaced persons camp on the outskirts of Mantua. The camp was set up after the partitioning of Trieste to house those people of Italian ancestry in the zone who did not wish to become part of Yugoslavia.

Gregory Peck has enjoyed a very successful year in the films. *Roman Holiday* has won an Academy Award for Audrey

Hepburn (his co-star in that delightful movie) and *Night People* (discussed in last month's issue of *DRAMATICS*) is one of the most exciting melodramas of the season. His forthcoming appearance is in *Man with a Million*, an adaptation of Mark Twain's *The Million Pound Banknote*. This film was produced in England by J. Arthur Rank and released in this country through United Artists.

*Man with a Million* is set in London at the turn of the 20th century. Mr. Peck plays a penniless American who is the guinea pig in an experiment conducted by two elderly and wealthy brothers. The brothers maintain that with a million pound banknote in his possession the indigent Henry Adams could live like a lord. It is unnecessary to spend the note, the brothers maintain — mere possession will enable one to live as though it were being expended. It would be unfair to divulge the complications that arise from the experiment, but I think you will enjoy seeing Gregory Peck and an excellent British supporting cast work them out.

Irving Jacoby and Willard Van Dyke produced *The Lonely Night* under the supervision of the Mental Health Film Board. The film has been endorsed by the National Association for Mental Health and the National Institute for Mental Health of the United States Public Health Service. In the film is related the story of the suicide attempt of Caroline Cram and of the psychiatric treatment that brings her back to soundness. It is an interesting film and one that has wide significance.

This film season has been an exciting one. It may be remembered as the season of the battle of the processes. It will also be remembered for many good films and for some fine performances. My own

favorites have been *The Man Between*, *The Band Wagon*, *From Here to Eternity*, *Night People*, the delicious Italian film — *The Golden Coach*, *The Cruel Sea*. Think of the scope of these films — the areas covered, the characters they introduce. Few media of entertainment can show such variety. Movies may not be "better than ever" (the rallying cry of the industry a little bit ago) but they are certainly reflecting our society and bringing the little something more to the picture that makes many of them art.





By PAUL MYERS

As the 1953/54 theatre season draws toward a close, one endeavors to evaluate the season and to select the outstanding features. It seems that the dominant note is that the off-Broadway theatre finally made its mark. Within the past week two offerings that began life downtown have moved into the Times Square sector.

One of these works we have already discussed in these pages. It is the Circle-in-the-Square production of Alfred Hayes' *The Girl on the Via Flaminia*. This is the latest in a line of successful productions which have been staged in-the-round in a former Greenwich Village night club. The ever vigilant New York Fire Department, however, has decided that the Circle-in-the-Square is not suitable for theatrical purposes and the house was closed. The play, however, has been transferred to the 48th Street Theatre, but it was necessary to re-stage the production for proscenium stage presentation. The transplanting has been successful and it seems likely that the *Girl* will grow in her new professional environment.

I have written at great length of the wonders accomplished this season by the Phoenix Theatre on lower Second Avenue. Their third production, *The Golden Apple*, is a retelling in American 19th century terms of the Helen of Troy legend. The critical reception was so wholeheartedly favorable and the demand for tickets so healthy that the production has moved to the Alvin Theatre (until very recently the home of Mary Martin and Charles Boyer in *Kind Sir*).

Many of you must have visited the performances of the American Savoyards during their long tour. This troupe began its existence as the Masque and Lyre at a hall on New York's upper East Side. Under the direction of Dorothy Raedler, they have presented almost the entire roster of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. The American Savoyards are now installed at the President Theatre. Having opened their New York season with *The Mikado*, they are now presenting *The Pirates of Penzance* and expect to continue through the next several weeks with the other G and S favorites.

There are few new arrivals scheduled between now and the conclusion of the season on June 1st. Jean Kerr (the wife of the drama critic for the New York *HERALD-TRIBUNE*, Walter F. Kerr) and Eleanor Brooke have penned *King of Hearts*. Their play is a comedy about a cartoonist who adopts an Australian orphan for publicity purposes. The cast includes Donald Cook, Jackie Cooper



Donald Cook, Cloris Leachman and Jackie Cooper in *King of Hearts*.

and Cloris Leachman (pictured closely) and Mr. Kerr has directed the production. There was some very interesting speculation regarding the identity of the individual who would review the work for Mr. Kerr's newspaper. Hobe Morrison, a critic on the staff of *VARIETY*, has been selected to do the critical honors.

Great hope is held for *The Magic and the Loss*, a new play by Julian Funt. Under the direction of Michael Gordon, a cast headed by Uta Hagen, Robert Preston, Edith Meiser and Lee Bowman is readying the drama for a New York premiere.

Only one big musical remains on the season's agenda, but it promises to be gigantic. Shirley Booth is a girl who can do almost anything... comedy like *My Sister Eileen*, musical comedy like *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* or drama like *Come Back Little Sheba* and *The Time of the Cuckoo*. In *By the Beautiful Sea*,

Miss Booth plays a vaudevillian who also operates a Coney Island boarding house. Her romance with a second-rate Shakespearean actor is disturbed by the arrival of his 17-year-old daughter. The time of the action is the latter part of the 19th century — a highly colorful period in Coney Island. The book of *By the Beautiful Sea* is by Herbert and Dorothy Fields, music by Arthur Schwartz.

Jerome Chodorov and Joseph Fields, the men who wrote the book for *Wonderful Town*, have written a new comedy. *Anniversary Waltz* is about a couple and the problems that ensue from their fifteenth wedding anniversary. Macdonald Carey and Kitty Carlisle are playing the leading roles in this work, which is now breaking in on the road.

I feel that the 1953/54 season has been one of the best in recent years. Certainly, the New York theatre (in spite of the fact that many of the houses themselves are being demolished) is in a healthier state than at any other time since before the war. The myriad tributary groups all over the city continue to exercise a beneficial effect. This season, several of the plays moved from a small house to a major Broadway theatre. New actors, directors, writers and producers are coming to the professional theatre from these groups, and theatregoers are beginning to enjoy the experience of finding new talent in the out-of-the-way showshops.

The drama awards are still to come and then the theatre-folk focus their attention on the rural playhouses and the summer festivals. Before very long, however, Broadway producers will begin casting, and a new season will be under way.



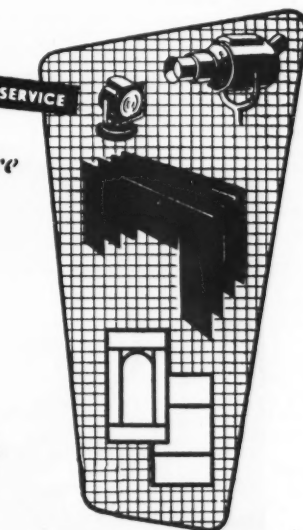
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## FORT WORTH, TEXAS

### Troupe 1318

At the beginning of this school year the members of our troupe, along with the sponsor decided to try something different and ambitious in the way of high school play productions. We decided to use the abundance of male talent we seem to have in the organization by staging the very recent Broadway show, *Stalag 17*.

When we announced this decision, many of the people in the community seemed to frown on the idea, as well as some of the teachers in our school. When informed of the coming production, the comments seem to go something like this — "You mean you are going to produce *Stalag 17*? Well, this I've got to see."

Fortunately for us, many of them did come to see our show. It turned out to be the most successful play ever to be staged at our school so far, both in profit and audience satisfaction. We produced the play two nights, December 10 and 11. The house was full both nights.

In the beginning we had over forty boys try out for the play, and the twenty who were awarded parts in the show did a splendid job from start to finish. We all wanted this one to be good, for it was the first time our director had thought us capable of doing a Broadway show.

After the closing night, we received many comments from the audiences which were most gratifying. Among them, many people said the one we always liked so much to hear — "I forgot I was watching a high school show, it looked so professional." Although we had spent many hours rehearsing during the eight weeks of preparation, and were all tired from the long grind, every one was genuinely sorry to see the show move into the history books of our school presentations. — *Toby Tyler, President.*



Silver Anniversary Celebration of both National Thespians and their own dramatic club, Troupe 1249, Warren G. Harding High School, Warren, Ohio, Kathleen E. Kelly, Sponsor.

The troupe was in charge of the high school assembly program October 30 which included a one-act play and a variety show. *The Song of Bernadette*, our second major production for the year, was presented November 23 for the benefit of the Unico Club welfare.

Our annual Christmas banquet was held December 14. During the Christmas season we presented several one-act plays for various service clubs and organizations in surrounding communities.

announce our co-operation with the Warren G. Harding Dramatics Club in presenting the comedy, *The Silver Whistle*, and entertaining the faculty, parents and guests at a Silver Anniversary Tea as our celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of National Thespian Society and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Dramatics Club. Although our Thespian Troupe is only in its second year, we are happy that it is the development of twenty-five years of continuous dramatics activity. O. A. Lovett, who was responsible for the club's activities twenty-five years ago, was one of the club's guests at the tea. The tea was so successful that the groups have decided to make it an annual affair. *The Silver Whistle* was highly commended for excellent acting. — *Reporter.*

## MIDLAND, MICHIGAN

### Troupe 902

As a performance dedicated to the Silver Anniversary of the National Thespian Society, Thespian Troupe 902 and the dramatics club produced *One Foot in Heaven*, November 24, 1953 in the Midland Senior High auditorium.

The production, marked by skillful interpretation, convincing acting and excellent staging, was enthusiastically received. The opinion that it should have been repeated until everyone in Midland had seen it was voiced in a letter to the editor of the MIDLAND DAILY NEWS by a reader who had seen the performance. — *Betty Power, Reporter.*

## CHENEY, WASHINGTON

### Troupe 267

The National Thespian Troupe 267 has participated in the fairy tale, *Sleeping Beauty*, which was given two performances in Cheney, four performances at the Orpheum Theatre in Spokane, and at Fairchild and Trent Grade Schools. We also took part in an all-school vaudeville show on November 20. Members of the troupe are also entering the Dramatics Festival at Gonzaga University. — *Joann Graham, Secretary.*

## BROWNSVILLE, PA.

### Troupe 187

Troupe 187 is sure rambling along this year. Starting the year off with a September Dance and the one-act play, *Overtones*, which was presented at the 25th anniversary at the Maryland Regional Conference. In November the children's play, *Five Little Peppers*, was a smash hit and the Fall Festival of One-Act Plays, which was given before three different audiences during the first week of December, also went off well.

The troupe holds program meetings monthly and has been supporting charitable funds of the area. On January 14 the apprentices were initiated into the club. Jean E. Donahey, sponsor, has been attending conventions throughout the eastern states. *Mr. Peepers* was the first three-act play of this year. In early spring the BHS Thespians will sponsor a Western Pennsylvania Conference. — *John Lent, Jr., Treasurer.*

# Thespian Chatter

## HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA

### Troupe 257

We started the year with a magazine campaign which extended from September 15 to 30, 1953, in which we reached our goal of \$3,000. The three top salesmen won trips to the National Dramatic Arts Conference to be held at Indiana University this summer. Our first major production for the year, *Take Care of My Little Girl*, was presented October 8.

Honor was paid to our Thespian Troupe October 26 by the Business and Professional Women's Club of Hazleton in the form of a radio program which was presented over the local radio station.

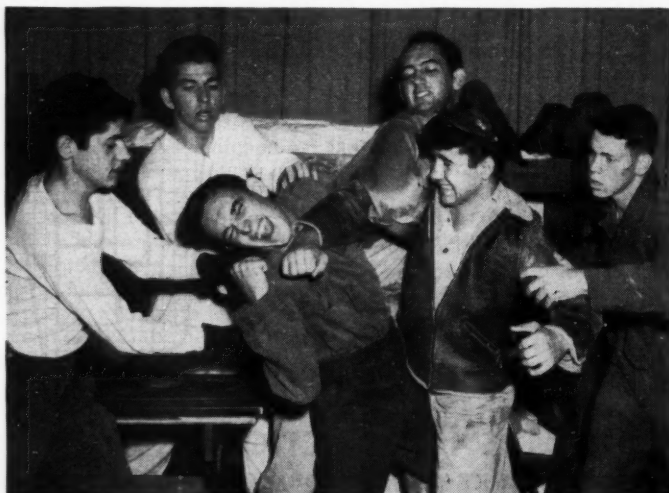
February 8, 1954, was the date of our third major production, *I Remember Mama*, for the benefit of the University Women's scholarship fund. Our final production, presented March 22, was *I Love Lucy*.

This has been a busy year celebrating not only the Silver Anniversary of our National Thespian Society, but the twentieth anniversary of our own Troupe 257 as well. Yes — a busy year, but more important, a most successful year. — *Jeanne Hamer, Secretary.*

## WARREN, OHIO

### Troupe 1249

Harding's Thespian Troupe 1249 is proud to



*Stalag 17*, Troupe 1318, Fort Worth, Texas, High School, Billy H. Smith, Sponsor.



**MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA Troupe 1146**  
After an SRO sign for *Father of the Bride* in November, the Edina Thespians produced *Our Town* in early March as a part of International Theatre Month. The proceeds from this production were given to an Edina student, chosen by the American Field Service, to spend the summer in Europe under the Student Exchange Program. The extreme enthusiasm with which this play was received gave the 101 students who worked on it and the director immense satisfaction. Now the senior class is preparing *The Man Who Came to Dinner* for its opening performance on April 30. — Ann Hodgson, Recorder.

**DAY CITY, MICHIGAN Troupe 143**  
For the first time in the history of our high school individual performances were applauded from the audience during the course of a scene. Our Kate and Petruchio were superb in our Thespian production of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* and many people paid us the compliment of buying tickets to see our play a second time. We dedicated the entire production to the Silver Anniversary of National Thespian Society.

Our entire school of 1600 was involved before we reached the performance of the play: Mr. Mauer, our art teacher, designed and built the set; Miss Sutton, a homemaking teacher, supervised the making of all of the costumes; and Mr. Murphy, our director, adapted the play and supervised the entire production. Other departments helped as well.

To a special Saturday matinee we invited students from surrounding high schools and had an audience of 450. Our audience total was 1,500.

Our students like Shakespeare so well after seeing this and last year's production of *Macbeth* that we are considering making a production of the Bard an annual affair. — Jerry Flood, Secretary.

**TONASKET, WASHINGTON Troupe 910**  
National Convention, Here We Come (We hope!).

Thespian parents were so vague about Thespians the troupe decided to give them something to go on. Yes, a formal initiation resulted and parents who were interested were invited to attend.

The purpose of the idea was twofold. It gave the parents an idea of what Thespians stand for and who they are. Also, it was an opportunity to get sorely needed parental opinions on the proposed trip to Indiana for the National Convention in June.

Immediately following the initiation ceremony, an open discussion was held. After much coaxing it was presumed that the general verdict was favorable.

A skit and make-up demonstration brought laughs from the 30 parents and friends there.

Refreshments were served and there was too much to eat. So, a brilliant Thespian cached the remaining food in a place known only to her, and what resulted? Of course, a party in the dining hall the next day. — Patsy Linden, Reporter.

**WYSLANTI, MICHIGAN Troupe 789**  
This year's activities began with the all-school play, *Stag Line*. Thespians did all of the make-up on the clowns during the three-night engagement of the annual Kiwanis Circus. In January we held an informal initiation. Our senior play, *Mr. Icebox*, was presented on March 27 and 28. Following the play we held our second initiation of the year. On April 8 our troupe is sponsoring three one-act plays in honor of Thespian's Silver Anniversary, which will be presented in a school assembly. The presentations will be *Beware the Bear*, *The Leader of the People* and *Accept Clear off Her Feet*. These plays will be directed by Madge Iseninger, our sponsor. — Ann Kisor, Secretary.

**MAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA Troupe 265**  
Our schedule this year is a full one. We have already presented a "National Thespian Talent Week," consisting of skits, songs, pantomimes and monologues, with *Sparkin'*, given as noon entertainment. In the senior play, *Curtain Going Up*, thirteen Thespians participated. Six had major roles in *Gloria*, our Christmas Pro-

gram. *Melody Jones*, the Student Body Play, will have nine Thespians performing. Coming up is a Thespian Assembly, radio plays over a local station and the "Night-of-One-Acts."

Recently ten new members were added to our troupe. Six delegates represented us at the regional conference, held at U. C. L. A. in January. — Nan Uhalt, Scribe.

**CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA Troupe 130**  
We had a very happy and successful season, climaxed by our success at the Pasadena Community Theatre Tournament, where we won the Governor's award, superior rating and best actor in our production of *Drums of Death*.

We did several one-act plays and in conjunction with the music department two vaudeville shows. *Mother Is a Freshman* was done for midterm and we finished with an old one most everyone has forgotten, *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*. Both of these plays went over extremely well. As they were so entirely different, it afforded a great opportunity for our Thespians to display extreme versatility. Cadet Drew Savage carried off most of the medals: Best Thespian, Best Actor, and the Pasadena Playhouse scholarship. Jane Dick from Ocean-side High School was voted Best Thespian; Eleanor Mankin, best actress for her work as June in *Trail*. All in all it was a very fine Thespian year. — Ruby K. Hays, Scribe.

**CELORON, NEW YORK Troupe 866**  
As a long-time theatre enthusiast, I had always wanted to do a musical comedy in our dramatic group. Finding it so difficult to purchase a show which contained the qualities we wanted, plus a reasonable royalty, we decided to write our own play.



One Foot in Heaven, Troupe 902, Midland, Mich., Sr. High School, Leitha, V. Perkins, Director.

This summer, with a committee, I wrote and planned out a musical comedy. Using popular music both new and old, I blended them together into a contemporary setting.

This three-act musical, entitled *Get Happy*, was presented to enthusiastic audiences on October 22 and 23 by the Masqueraders of Southwestern Central School, and concluded another successful production. — Anton Neubauer, Reporter.

**ATHENS, PENNSYLVANIA Troupe 482**  
The newly established Troupe 482 held its first meeting in the beginning of December at which time elections were held.  
President ..... Leland Thompson  
Vice-President ..... Peggy Lynch  
Treasurer ..... Robert Rentschler  
Secretary ..... Marilyn Cohen  
Recording Scribe ..... Sylvia Hugo

On Monday evening, December 7, we were installed by the members of the Sayre Troupe. The first part of the meeting was devoted to the installation and the second part to the entertainment, which was charades. Refreshments were served. Everyone enjoyed this joint meeting and the two troupes plan to get together at another time. — Marilyn Cohen, Reporter.

**SELMA, ALABAMA Troupe 1071**  
The informal Thespian initiation and installation ceremonies of Troupe 1071 were held on October 28 in the R. B. Hudson High School Auditorium. The entire student body and faculty saw twelve candidates admitted to the Society and the presentation of the Charter by R. W. Stone, Principal of Hudson High. The pledge of membership was taken and the new members received their membership cards, seals, and certificates. Bertram A. Martin, Troupe Sponsor, installed the officers.

The Thespians opened the 1953-54 dramatic season in Selma on December 4 with the presentation of *Take Care of My Little Girl*. It was very well received, and we consider it among our best productions. In February the Thespians did *The Silver Cord* under the auspices of the Library Club of Hudson High. Many other activities have been planned to make this a memorable year for the Thespians of R. B. Hudson High School. — Carol E. Stone, Secretary.

**ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA Troupe 753**  
George Washington High School is proud of its new Thespian Troupe which was organized in the Fall (1953), through the efforts of our Dramatics Club sponsor, Mrs. Dorothea Harrison. Ten members comprise its roll.

So far the Thespians of G. W. H. S. have not attempted any production alone, but have worked hand-in-hand with the Dramatics Club. Our Fall presentation consisted of three one-act plays, *Balcony Scene*, *This Way to Heaven* and *Mooney's Kid Don't Cry*. This production was acclaimed the best to have been presented at our school for as long as anyone can remember.

*Mooney's Kid Don't Cry* was taken to the District One-Act Play Festival where it won

second place with an excellent rating. We are very proud of Jimmy Godwin, the male lead, who copped the Outstanding Actor award at the contest.

Another one-act, *The Dear Departed*, was presented after school on February 2 to the student body, and rehearsals are now under way for our Spring play, *Angel Street*, which may be better known as *Gaslight*.

We felt that it was a great honor and privilege to be initiated into the National Thespian Society, and only hope that we can live up to the motto, "Act well your part; there all the honor lies." — Phyllis Nelson, Secretary.

**RAYMOND, WASHINGTON Troupe 224**  
The Raymond High School Thespian Troupe 224 was installed February 12, 1954. Warren Flanagan, principal, acted as installing officer. In front of a rostrum decorated with the Thespian insignia, Mr. Flanagan administered the oaths of office to: Dick Stephens, president; Jo Ann McGuire, Vice-President; Janice Little, Secretary; Phyllis Klaudt, Treasurer; and Karla Schultz, Scribe.

So far this year we have put on two three-act plays, a radio show, a Christmas play over the radio, and numerous skits and short plays.



We are proud to be members of the National Thespian Society and we hope we will be an inspiration to our school.—*Karla Schultz, Scribe.*



#### BUT WHAT A BONNET!

I am a bonnet! Oh yes, I am! My birthdate was in the eighteenth century, and I am now upon the curly head of Miss Bella Hedley. Oh, by the way, I am playing in *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, presented by the Dramatic Club of Mount Saint Dominic Academy, Caldwell, New Jersey. There is a fine group of actresses in this school, but if I must say so myself, I really think I add quite a bit to the beauty of the occasion. Although my part is small, I, as a pretty orange bonnet, really think I help to make the play the great success it is.

*Diane Martin, Troupe 683, Caldwell, N. J.*

#### VANDERGRIFT, PA.

#### Troupe 1186

Added to the usual nervous tension before curtain time of *No More Homework*, our production this year, was the fact that we had as our guests the cast of the same production from Stowe Township High School, who had traveled 45 miles to see our play. Our anxieties and fears proved groundless, however, for when the curtain fell, these students led the applause, and they were most generous in their comments during our party afterwards. Through this meeting, we have made many new friends, and some of us continue this friendship by means of letters. — *Jo Ann Bucci, Scribe.*

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#### SANTA PAULA, CALIFORNIA Troupe 1268

Although we had only one "old" member at the beginning of the year, and were unable to find time for our initiation until December, our troupe-in-embryo worked with the dramatics classes as a whole to produce John Van Druten's adaptation of *I Remember Mama*. Sixteen of our twenty-eight new members headed a cast of *A Christmas Carol*, which was our Christmas gift to the community; and several of us provided the backbone for the public speaking class presentation of *The Little Dog Laughed*. Work on the Senior play and another initiation will keep us occupied this spring. — *Darcy Rudolph, Reporter.*

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#### FAYETTEVILLE, NEW YORK Troupe 98

Have you ever seen a large white rabbit, six and one-half feet tall? This may seem a bit unusual, but by the time rehearsals were over for our major play of the year, *Harvey*, the cast was almost convinced that there was such an animal! This well-known play by Mary Chase was something entirely different from anything our Thespian Troupe 98 had ever attempted. Preparing for this production not only required a great deal of time and effort from the cast,

but the backstage crew was also kept busy. Sirens, buzzers, doorbells and telephones all added to the confusion; not to mention the quick change from a library in an old mansion to the main office in a mental hospital, which had to take place between scenes. After the final curtain came down, everyone was ebullient in praise of the play and a cast party concluded the exciting evening.

One-act plays seem to be very popular with our troupe this year. *Step Lively, Please, I'm a Fool* and *The Bond Between* are in preparation now. These are being directed by Thespians, with members of the Dramatic Club doing the acting. These plays will help the Dramatic Club members, who are working toward National Thespians, gain the needed points for membership. After these plays have been presented as an assembly, plans will begin for spring initiation. — *Barbara McIntosh, Secretary.*

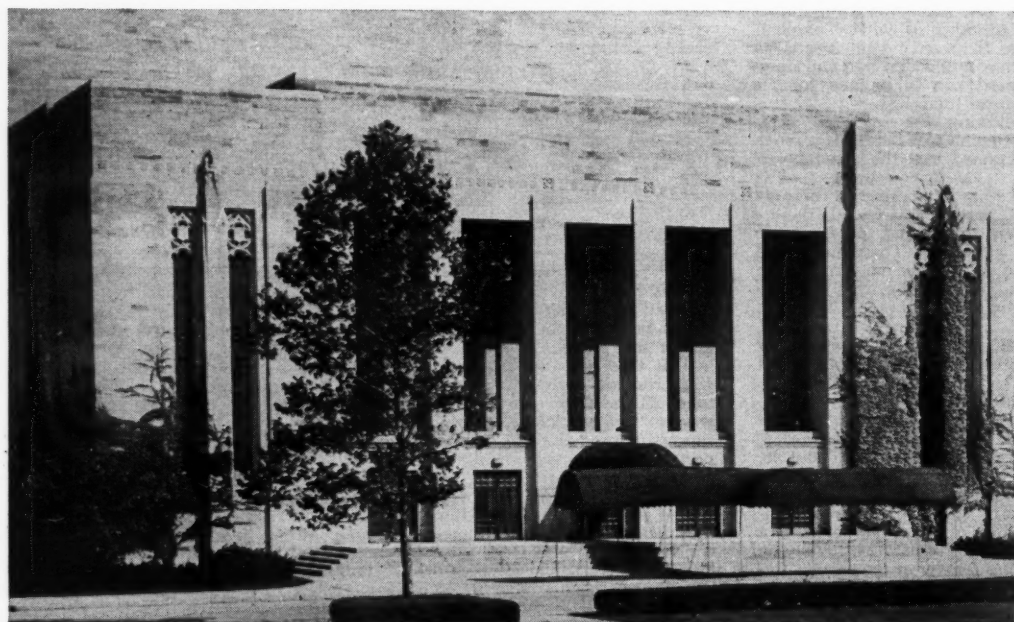
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#### BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

#### Troupe 1248

Thespian Troupe 1248 of the Johns Hopkins Educational Theatre, Baltimore, Maryland, is indeed unique as its membership is composed of teen-agers from secondary schools in that area. On March 27 this school presented an original dramatization of *David Copperfield* at two performances with casts of 40 teen-agers from Eastern High School, Forest Park High School, Glen Burnie Junior High, Dundalk High School, Clifton Park Jr. High School, Western High School, Catholic High School, Roland Park County School, Pimlico No. 223, Baltimore City College, Junior High School No. 49. In addition one of the cast was a seventeen-year-old Solange Royez, who is studying at Hopkins on a Fulbright Fellowship from Megeve, France. Guests of the troupe for the performance were ten members of the Junior Curtain Timers, Children's Theatre, Richmond, Va.

## SILVER ANNIVERSARY NATIONAL DRAMATIC ARTS CONFERENCE



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**JUNE 21 THROUGH 26, 1954, BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA**

**WOODCREST, DELAWARE** Troupe 883  
What to do! We at Conrad High School could not decide how to celebrate the National Thespian Society's Silver Anniversary. There were many suggestions, most of them for a party. Surely a party could be a part of the celebration, but wasn't there just a little something special we could do?

It came to us suddenly. What better way to pay tribute to this organization of amateur actors than to present our fall play in honor of the Society?

The play, *Golden River*, was highly successful and everyone had a most enjoyable evening, for all were taking part in helping the National Thespian Society to celebrate its Silver Anniversary. — *Beverly Howett, Reporter.*

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**MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA** Troupe 27  
*Money! Money! Money!* Can you think of a better Silver Anniversary slogan? With this question the master of ceremonies introduced an assembly program designed to focus attention upon the founding of the National Thespian Society and the presentation of the comedy, *Mr. Barry's Etchings*. In addition to a short scene from the play, the program featured a high stepping chorus line dancing and singing to the *Gold Diggers Song*, and *It Was Nice While the Money Rolled In*.

Carrying out the theme of *Money! Money! Money!*, the program continued with a vocalist and a style show in which the models were students wearing their own clothes. The narrative was by a former student who, before her marriage, had been a fashion designer on the West Coast.

All advertising for *Mr. Barry's Etchings* called attention to the anniversary celebration and centered around the theme, *Thespians Make*



Mary Miller, Sponsor, and Marie Anne Davison, President, Troupe 59, Danville, Ill., High School, shown with silver bowl presented to Miss Miller in honor of her Silver Anniversary as a Thespian Sponsor.

*Money*. Troupe 27 did just that with their presentation of *Mr. Barry's Etchings*. — *Katharine Ashworth, Reporter.*

—o—  
**DANVILLE, ILLINOIS** Troupe 59  
At the Dramatic Club banquet on December 22, 1953, Sponsor Mary Miller was honored as one of the two directors of dramatics in the United States, who have been with the same troupe since the founding of the National Thespian Society in 1929 by being presented with a silver bowl. This banquet was in celebration of the Silver Anniversary of this Society.

The banquet table was beautifully decorated with poinsettias, greenery, Christmas decorations and candles. In the center was a large, glittering silver 25. Of the 140 members, alumni and guests present a number traveled hundreds of miles. One of the performers for the floor show was Thespian Millie Trares, who is now studying in New York for the professional theatre. — *Reporter.*

—o—  
**CARLISLE, PENNSYLVANIA** Troupe 214  
Thespian Troupe 214 of Carlisle, Pennsylv-

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**BERNARDINE**

by Mary Chase

**THE CRUCIBLE**

by Arthur Miller

**I KNOW MY LOVE**

by S. N. Behrman

**JANE**

by Somerset Maugham and S. N. Behrman

**THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING**

by Christopher Fry

**THE PARADISE QUESTION**

by Richard Maibaum

**SHAKUNTALA (THE LOST RING)**

by Kalidasa

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Dr. Gladys Lynch  
Dr. William Reardon  
Mr. John Ellery

### GUEST INSTRUCTORS:

Mr. Henderson Forsythe  
Erie Playhouse  
Prof. Helen F. Lauterer  
University of Oklahoma  
Prof. John Paul  
Phoenix College, Arizona  
Mr. Robert Proper  
Painesville High School, Ohio

Applications for admission to the summer courses and plays should be made to the Director of the University Theatre, E. C. Mabie, C101 Dramatic Arts Building, School of Fine Arts, University of Iowa, Iowa City.

vania, is "going all out" to make this Silver Anniversary a really significant year. The first event was the attendance of some of the members at the Cumberland, Maryland, conference. All inspired and longing to do some practical dramatics work, we plunged into our first production of the season, a children's play, *Once Upon a Clothesline*. Part of the agenda for the remainder of the year includes two radio broadcasts, an assembly program and an alumni banquet. Our part in the Upper Darby Regional Conference was a presentation of the fantasy, *The Lost Kiss*. To top off the year, plans are being made to attend the National convention — and incidentally, we are hoping to display some talent there, too! — Jackie Carter, Reporter.

—O—  
**CRISMAN, INDIANA**

**Troupe 528**

Melodrama was the key to Portage High School's celebration of the Thespian Silver Anniversary. Troupe 528 wrote, directed and filmed its first movie, *Flowers for Bravery*.

When Bravery Strongheart discovers Howard Cowardice making passes at Lulubell Flowers, he strides to the rescue. Sinister Cowardice hits Bravery with a stick, knocking him senseless. He then carries helpless Lulubell to nearby railroad tracks, tying her there. As the train rumbles closer, the hero, awakening, runs to aid the screaming heroine. After freeing the pretty Lulubell, Bravery lays the villain low. He then collects the hero's reward: a big kiss from Lulubell. — John M. Walsh, III, Reporter.

—O—

**WINSLOW, WASHINGTON**

**Troupe 416**

Holding a University of Washington map, two Thespian delegates, who represented our Drama Club and Thespian Troupe 416, tried in vain to locate their positions on the huge campus. The two representatives, Alice Fassett and Beverly Johnson, were attending a two day Regional Conference for National Thespians at the University of Washington November 6 and 7. After determining their whereabouts, both girls were taken on a tour of the campus, had dinner at a gala banquet and received free tickets to



Installation and Initiation Ceremony of Troupe 873, Shadyside, Ohio, High School, Rudolph Mumley, Sponsor.

the UW Penthouse Theatre production of *Fancy Meeting You Again*.

The two delegates said that they really enjoyed the conference and expressed hopes that our Drama Club would take in a play at the University of Washington very soon. — Beverly Johnson, Secretary.

—O—

**SHADYSIDE, OHIO**

**Troupe 873**

Formal installation ceremonies for officers of the recently organized Thespian Troupe were conducted at the assembly program in the high school auditorium. Following the installation a luncheon for charter members and guests was served in the economics room. One of the first projects of the Thespian Troupe was the production of *The Valiant*, a one-act drama. It was presented for the entire student body and was

praised by everyone. It also received high recognition at the Ohio Eastern Festival at Ste. Clairsville. — Nancy Kaveski, Secretary.

—O—

**COLD SPRING, MINNESOTA**

**Troupe 674**

With a school population of 310 at St. Boniface High School we are pleased to report that almost 225 of the students have "trodded the boards" at least once this year. Each class vies with the other to present the biggest play of the year.

In October, the 90 freshmen presented an original homecoming program followed closely by a sophomore talent show. When the junior class presented *Sleeping Beauty*, the school rocked with excitement because of the fairylike charm of the production. The seniors put the cream on top by their offering as their class play, *Murder in a Nunnery*.

At present each class is represented in the one-act play festival production: *The Princess Marries the Page*. Last, but not least, 49 members have merited membership in the Thespian Society and ten in the Catholic Theatre Conference group. — Eileen Schreifels, Erma Hansen, Recording Secretaries.

—O—

**BRISTOW, OKLAHOMA**

**Troupe 183**

To wish appropriately many happy returns to the namesakes of Thespis, Troupe 183 presented three one-act plays February 4 at a school matinee and a public night performance. Our Silver Anniversary program of plays, which included *The Valiant* for drama lovers; *Thank You Doctor* for those enjoying comedy spiced with a bit of mystery; and *Seeds of Suspicion* for "whodunit" fans provided good parts for our entire troupe. Under the able direction of our sponsor, Mrs. Augusta Vining, our plays were successful from the standpoints of both audience appeal and finance. — Ellen Claire Ostrom, President.

—O—  
**HOUSTON, TEXAS**

**Troupe 897**

At its second annual induction ceremony held on November 19, 1953, Troupe 897 celebrated locally the Silver Anniversary of the National Thespian Society. Twenty-one pledges were inducted at this ceremony. Participating in the program in addition to Dr. Bryant were the following: C. A. Ladner, former Director of Dramatics and Counselor, Wheatley High School; Mattelia B. Graves, former member of B. T. W., Dramatics Club teacher; Vernon Chambers, station manager KCOH, Pasadena Playhouse; A. L. Hucka, and Roi Leeland Hopkins, Sponsor. — Reporter.

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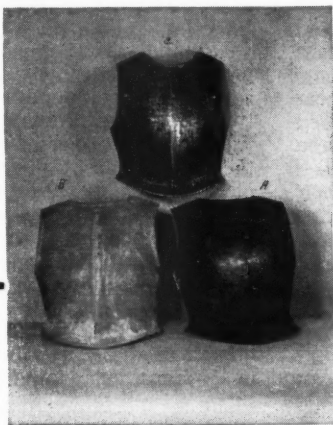


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## I DIRECT

(Continued from page 16)

What a blow to one's Ego!  
But behind and beyond it all  
has Emerged *The Director* —

The Director who understands:  
(in the words of Gassner)

\* The art of play craftsmanship, for  
there isn't one play in a hundred that  
Evidences an *adequate* mastery of that  
art.

\*\* Acting, because professionally ac-  
tors, like writers, have no chance and no  
place to learn their craft adequately.

\*\*\* Every branch of the Theatre, be-  
cause the theatre today is no longer any-  
one's off place between, radio, television  
and Hollywood.

The Director must not only know his  
business but he must know Everyone's  
business too!

But  
he  
must  
never  
let  
anyone  
know  
he  
knows  
it!

He must have  
Dreams — Crystal clear!  
Knowledge of the Past of the Theatre,  
Hopes for its future.  
Study all theories

to develop his own.  
Work for the play,  
Build a throne  
Through honest endeavor!  
Use Patterns  
that glitter  
Like Winter's first frost.  
Build strong —  
A wood Cross —  
Adorn it with Wonder,  
With work, and with  
Care — He'll be  
God's Gift to the Theatre —  
A Director — rare!

• • •

We were content in our minds as we  
tackled our job — had the full support of  
the gang . . .

Not a Snob —

In the Ensemble to gum-up the works —  
Everyone was assigned to a job,  
and no one to shirk.

First, Scripts had been read by the sixes  
and dozens —

By noted playwrights,  
and I guess by some of their cousins.  
The play, we decided, must promise to  
give thru its own vitality —  
The right to live!

Should we choose:

A Comedy,  
A Farce,  
A Tragedy, true?

Guess we'd only know

By thumbing them thru!

Farces and Comedies need  
mathematical precision;  
Fantasies — lightness, and  
delicate rhythm!

Is Tragedy a thing we must shun —  
Too hard on the Emotions of the  
Young?

Maybe we should do a cutting from  
*The Taming of the Shrew*, or  
*Shaw's St. Joan*,

Or — *The Medium and the Telephone* —  
a *Happy Journey* or *Antic Spring*!

That's a neat show  
and right up our alley!  
Gracious, the parts just  
fit Marilee, Don and Sally.  
Sure, it's old, but it's always new.  
Cause it's about kids like Me and You!  
'Tis about:

Teen-Age twitters  
on an Ant hill brown!  
Boy, it will surely  
Bring our School renown.  
We secured the rights,  
and royalty paid.  
Planned a prompt book  
and a small stage model made.  
We studied it thoroly,  
Seriously, joyously —  
It was jolly-poking-at  
us-cheerful fun!  
Holding the mirror up  
to teen-age life!

It would be great to  
our ourselves imitate?  
We'd do it right  
and never overplay  
The fanciful Comedy!  
It was almost a review  
of our four happy years



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in Our Wonderful School!  
We could almost see  
Each one we knew  
in the Cast as the Author  
had written them so true —  
So it was Easy to Select  
the Cast —

That would bring the play  
to Life — all this  
was easily done without  
any strife.

Then we let each contract  
Most Carefully, and then  
set about to design the Colorful  
Scenery.

Then planned the business  
in exact detail,  
and Scheduled rehearsals, to which  
each must  
be without fail!

They were friendly rehearsals  
because we were all friends,  
and knew we were together  
to tie all ends into one  
perfect whole!  
And we worked with all our  
hearts and Soul  
To do the job right!

Two weeks were allotted  
to fuse all our art.  
Then Dress Rehearsal  
brot all together  
and we were ready to  
Start on the boards,  
the lights and ready for  
Applause!

All mechanical difficulties  
had been ironed out. . .  
All areas were lighted properly,  
of that no doubt.  
The Costumes, the Scenery, the props were  
all there!  
Excitement, Anticipation, and Butterflies  
were Everywhere!

Movement, pace and pitch were true —  
So to rehearsals we could mark  
— Finis — (thru).  
For it was on to State  
and the Enchantment  
of a College  
Campus! Where we'd see Bette Belle  
and 'put on our play'  
and put it on well! . . .

was a Festival Supreme  
Where Our Theatre was Queen  
with a Gathering of the Young and the Fair  
who were:

Looking beyond Tomorrow's  
Cleaning Thorofare!  
Looking and learning,  
Loving and yearning  
To give what Youth has to give: Laughter,  
tears,  
Spirit,

Craftsmanship,  
Ambition,  
Loyalty and  
Courage

To the Future.

. . . .

ANTIC SPRING was rated fine  
and My Master was in line —  
for a Scholarship!  
Uncle Sam had a bid in too  
for his Service in Marine Blue,  
and a West Point exam  
Had found him — All Man!  
Now — Really  
What to do!  
and what about me?

. . . .

We stood there — still. Most of the  
gay, sad crowd had moved on; the glow  
on the hill was slowly ebbing away as I  
glanced lovingly at my Master.

I looked at his *Best Thespian* pin,  
and then looked, as best I could, at  
my *own* Better-than-Best Thespian  
blanket, — with, — no, not four stars,  
but five Dog Stars!

and  
then  
I looked tenderly at little Masks, (she  
had been to most functions with us of  
late) and

Winked — for she knew  
that Each star was  
for one of our  
Pups!  
Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aris-  
tophanes, and Mrs. McThing!

. . . .

My Master would be gone  
and what about me?

Well, What About Me?!  
AS A BEST THESPIAN  
I HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES . . . .

## INDEX TO VOLUME XXV

October, 1953, to May, 1954

	Mo. Pg.		Mo. Pg.
Anniversary Conference Picture Preview . . . . .	May 4	"Our Place in the Picture" . . . . .	Oct. 8
Arena Staging (Series)		"Planting the Seed" . . . . .	May 12
"Housing" . . . . .	Oct. 14	Plays of the Month:	
"Lighting Equipment" . . . . .	Nov. 12	Alabaster Box, The . . . . .	Apr. 20
"Lighting Control" . . . . .	Dec. 11	Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp . . . . .	Nov. 14
"Scenery, Properties, Sound" . . . . .	Jan. 11	Annie Get Your Gun . . . . .	Jan. 14
"Make-Up and Costuming" . . . . .	Feb. 10	Berkeley Square . . . . .	Jan. 14
"Directing" . . . . .	Mar. 14	Clutching Claw, The . . . . .	Feb. 20
"Acting" . . . . .	Apr. 15	Curious Savage, The . . . . .	Apr. 21
"Publicity" . . . . .	May 17	Elizabeth, The Queen . . . . .	Apr. 21
Belgium, Secondary School Drama in . . . . .	Mar. 24	Father of the Bride . . . . .	Mar. 19
Best Thespians, 1952-53 . . . . .	Nov. 22	George Washington Slept Here . . . . .	Dec. 20
Blank, Earl, ed.: Plays of the Month, q. v. — "Planting the Seed" . . . . .	May 12	Goodbye, My Fancy . . . . .	Feb. 21
Book Reviews, see "Brief Views"		Good Housekeeping . . . . .	Nov. 15
"Brief Views" (Book reviews), Last page each issue		Guest in the House . . . . .	May 22
"Community Servant, A" . . . . .	Mar. 10	Heiress, The . . . . .	Nov. 14
"Dear Fellow Thespians" . . . . .	Nov. 8	I Remember Mama . . . . .	May 22
DeLisi, Frank A.: "Members of the Cast" . . . . .	Mar. 12	Jane Eyre . . . . .	Dec. 21
Denmark, Secondary School Drama in . . . . .	Apr. 12	January Thaw . . . . .	Feb. 20
Derwent, Clarence: "Greetings from ANTA" . . . . .	Mar. 7	Jump Over the Moon . . . . .	Mar. 18
"Don't Darken the Room!" . . . . .	Feb. 15	Late Christopher Bean, The . . . . .	Oct. 18
"Dreams Do Come True" . . . . .	Oct. 10	Life with Father . . . . .	Apr. 20
Elicker, Paul E.: "Honor to Whom Honor Is Due" . . . . .	Apr. 7	Lo and Behold . . . . .	Oct. 18
England, Secondary School Drama in . . . . .	Oct. 16	Man Who Came to Dinner, The . . . . .	May 22
France, Secondary School Drama in . . . . .	Feb. 12	Nine Girls . . . . .	Oct. 19
Friedrich, Willard: "Brief Views," q. v.		No More Homework . . . . .	Mar. 18
Germany, Secondary School Drama in . . . . .	Nov. 13	Our Hearts Were Young and Gay . . . . .	Jan. 15
"Give Us More Shakespeare" . . . . .	Apr. 11	Papa Is All . . . . .	Feb. 21
"Greetings from ANTA" . . . . .	Mar. 7	Pygmalion . . . . .	May 23
Grey, Margaret: "Then and Now" . . . . .	Dec. 8	Ramshackle Inn . . . . .	Oct. 18
Hewitt, Bernard: "Our Heartiest Congratula- tions" . . . . .	Dec. 7	Room for One More . . . . .	Mar. 18
Holland, Secondary School Drama in . . . . .	Dec. 12	Silver Cord, The . . . . .	Dec. 20
"Honor to Whom Honor Is Due" . . . . .	Apr. 7	Sky High . . . . .	Nov. 14
Jennings, Blandford: "Our Place in the Pic- ture" . . . . .	Oct. 8	'Sno Haven . . . . .	Jan. 15
Leeper, Harry T.: "Dear Fellow Thespians" . . . . .	Nov. 8	Strange Boarders . . . . .	Apr. 20
"Look! No Nerves!" . . . . .	Dec. 10	Why the Chimes Rang . . . . .	Dec. 22
Marshall, Doris Marsolais (Series):		"Play's the Thing, The" . . . . .	Jan. 9
"I Choose Dramatics" . . . . .	Oct. 13	"Power of Organization, The" . . . . .	May 12
"I Build Scenery" . . . . .	Nov. 11	Radio and TV (Reviews)	
"I Make Costumes" . . . . .	Dec. 14	Oct. 22, Nov. 18, Dec. 22, Jan. 18, Feb. 18, Mar. 20, Apr. 22, . . . . .	May 20
"I Make Up" . . . . .	Jan. 12	Roberts, Lloyd E.: "Dreams Do Come True" . . . . .	Oct. 10
"I Act" . . . . .	Feb. 11	"Running the House" . . . . .	Oct. 11, Nov. 10
"I Sell the Show" . . . . .	Mar. 13	Saunders, Freddie Milam: "Look! No Nerves!" . . . . .	Dec. 10
"I Made Thespians!" . . . . .	Apr. 14	Secondary School Drama Abroad (Series)	
"I Direct a Play" . . . . .	May 16	In England . . . . .	Oct. 16
Masters, Lillian Decker: "Two for the Show" . . . . .	May 14	In Germany . . . . .	Nov. 13
"Members of the Cast" . . . . .	Mar. 12	In Holland . . . . .	Dec. 12
Miller, Frederick K.: "Our Pioneer Playhouse" . . . . .	Apr. 10	In Switzerland . . . . .	Jan. 10
Miller, Leon C.: "More in '54" . . . . .	Apr. 8	In France . . . . .	Feb. 12
Miller, Mary: "There All the Honor Lies" . . . . .	Feb. 8	In Belgium . . . . .	Mar. 24
Mills, Si: Radio and TV, q. v.		In Denmark . . . . .	Apr. 12
Mitchell, Emily M.: "Running the House" . . . . .	Oct. 11, Nov. 10	Skinner, Ted: Arena Staging, q. v.	
"More in '54" . . . . .	Apr. 8	Smith, Rose G.: "The Play's the Thing" . . . . .	Jan. 9
Movies (Reviews)		Sublett, Ernest: "A Community Servant" . . . . .	Mar. 10
Oct. 24, Nov. 20, Dec. 19, Jan. 20, Feb. 22, Mar. 23, Apr. 18, . . . . .	May 24	Switzerland, Secondary School Drama in . . . . .	Jan. 10
Murphy, Clarence R.: "Give Us More Shakes- peare" . . . . .	Apr. 11	Theatre (Professional)	
Myers, Paul: Movies, q. v.		Oct. 25, Nov. 21, Dec. 18, Jan. 21, Feb. 23, Mar. 22, Apr. 19, . . . . .	May 25
Opp, Paul E.: "The Power of Organization" . . . . .	May 12	"Then and Now" . . . . .	Dec. 8
"Our Heartiest Congratulations" . . . . .	Dec. 7	"There All the Honor Lies" . . . . .	Feb. 8
"Our Pioneer Playhouse" . . . . .	Apr. 10	Thespian Chatter	
		Oct. 26, Dec. 24, Jan. 22, Feb. 24, Mar. 26, Apr. 24, . . . . .	May 26
		"Two for the Show" . . . . .	May 14
		TV, see Radio and TV	
		Tyler, Gerald: Secondary School Drama Abroad (Series) q. v.	



## TWO FOR THE SHOW

(Continued from page 15)

actors on stage, or there may be a general exodus to the nearest drinking fountain or rest room.

But a play well performed for children brings forth a quite different reaction. There is no greater reward for the actor playing to children than that uninhibited and spontaneous response when the small ones cry out against the villain, or when some become so rapt in the play and so oblivious to surroundings that they automatically stand on their seats. Others may even unconsciously edge to the footlights, the better to hang on every word and gesture. There is no limit to the impressions the high school actors leave with this audience. Children are enriched in many ways by what they see on the stage.

Actors must develop a greater sense of creativity to play for children. Too many high schools attempt to imitate the professional stage, or they fall into the stereotyped pattern of presenting only the teen-age, family, living room type of farce. Children's theatre demands, and gets, creativity in both acting and production. Settings present an artistic challenge, for there can be a perfect dream world created with only drapes and a few set pieces; or magic can be revealed

with complete and colorful scenery. Experimental staging, with freedom from conventional limitations, can create an enjoyable illusion for children. On the other hand, if realism is attempted in scene design, it must be absolute realism.

High school and child actors playing together learn from each other. The child actor usually knows his own and everyone else's lines first. His alertness is a spur for the adult actor. At the same time the high school actor has the responsibility of setting an example for this eager, quick-to-learn young actor. The high school actor realizes that the children's play gives him meaty acting roles, suited to his abilities and chock full of creative possibilities. If he plays the role well and convinces both his fellow child actors and his child audience, he has a personal triumph in acting.

More and more high schools each year incorporate at least one play for children in their season, and this play for children has a strong appeal for adults as well.

Adults in the audience recapture their childhood illusions and enjoy the play as good theatre fare. Then too there is the plain and simple fact that it is fun to play for the child audience. There is just enough "ham" in any actor, young or old, to be gratified by that breathless and admiring enthusiasm of the child audience. The satisfaction of playing to an

attentive and openly responsive audience cannot be denied. Once the actor accepts the challenge of holding that audience, he is rewarded with the spontaneous and overt reactions of the honest child audience.

The high school theatre should feel a definite obligation to do children's plays. There is that vast and eager young audience who should not be denied the experience of good theatre within the realm of their understanding.

High school people and children working together to present plays for children can gain a wide and rich experience. Actors, crews and audience share equally in the benefits of this combination of theatre.

In summarizing, it can be said that the high school actor benefits in many ways: serving the community with a needed type of theatre presentation; developing future adult actors; developing a future theatre audience; rising to the challenge of perfection in acting and staging for the child audience; taking advantage of the opportunity for greater creativity; getting the satisfaction of the response of the child audience; playing roles suited to his capabilities; and, most important of all, the invaluable experience of human relationship in working together in a tremendously important business.

55

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## ARENA STAGING

(Continued from page 17)

attention that the manner in which members of the audience are handled when they arrive at the theatre has a great deal to do with the success or failure of the show, regardless as to how well the actors may be directed and rehearsed.

**Use of reserved seats.** The reserved seat plan is almost a must in the arena theatre because of the limited seating, but there are other strong reasons for its practice. Reserved seats give members of the audience the feeling that they are going to the *theatre*. "Two on the aisle, please," may not be as appropriate to the arena as the proscenium theatre, but it carries the same magic. Reserved seats give the theatre a distinction over the movie audience, and, let us hope, contribute to a *better* audience. Audiences can be seated compactly, always important for the empathy wanted. Finally, the use of reserved seats provides an effective device for breaking up gangs of giggling girls and boisterous boys.

**Ushering.** Another way of preparing an audience for a night at the theatre is through the ushering. There is bound to be a desirable psychological effect when members of the audience are ushered to reserved seats by attractive young ladies in formal dress. Arrange for rehearsals with the ushers. Unsold tickets from previous productions can be made use of in training the ushers to seat one another and thus learn their task. Have a sufficient number of ushers as three-fourths of a reserved seat audience will

arrive during the last ten minutes before the *curtain* time. See that there is no bottleneck in the ticket taking and instruct the ushers to seat the audience courteously but quickly. By all means, *seat no one after the act begins and watch the entrances to see that no one tries to slip into his seat during an act!* Believe me, it can happen!

**Box office.** The workers in the box office must know their jobs. Seating charts should be kept up-to-date and constantly checked against tickets in the box. When there is no line at the box office, give the patron time to select the seat he wants, but when a line forms, it is necessary to speed up the process. Avoid leaving single seats; try to fill rows solidly before opening other rows. Always have sufficient change. Double check that the buyer is given tickets for the night he requests.

**Running the show.** Establish the reputation for beginning plays on time, and thus train your audience to be prompt. Those who miss the first act of one play will be on time for the next play. Time the intermissions and state the duration of the intermission on the program. Flash a warning two or three minutes before the beginning of the act to follow. Finally, the House Manager should check the temperature of the theatre and make necessary adjustments to keep the audience as comfortable as possible.

**The actor and the performance.** The actor should expect and desire a keyed-up feeling for the *first performance*, and consciously keep on his toes for following

performances to avoid any lapses. He must be business-like at all times off stage. An actor should profit from the experience of playing before an audience and make, with the approval or suggestion of the director, changes which will improve the performance. Members of the cast should be seen after the performance by only those members of the audience who stay behind. Actors should be on guard for after performance comments. As the arena production is usually presented for several performances, there are bound to be some performances which seem to go better than others, but each audience should be allowed to think they have seen the best. Don't tell them, in effect, that they should have come on another night.

**The director and the performance.** The director has no useful function to perform backstage during a performance. The cast should be trained to be on their own. The best place for the director is in the audience where he can study the performance. However, there is a warning for the director of the arena play which does not apply to the director of the proscenium production. The director is inconspicuous in the proscenium audience; not so in the arena. Consequently, the arena director has to be careful not to reveal that he knows the show. He must stay *in character* as a member of an audience seeing the play for the first time. And not until after the last performance can the director relax and take his well deserved *short vacation* before beginning his next arena production.

# FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE

a comedy by Robert Orth

8 men (some are small parts), 5 women. Royalty \$10.00. Price 75 Cents.

Here's a play that is delightfully different and carries a guarantee of refreshment and fun.

It concerns Gerald Frahler. Gerald used to be the "life of the party". Then, when he got to the age when girls should interest him, something happened. He became quiet, shy, and hid within himself. Girls scared him to death.

A group of men in the waiting room outside the pearly gates, looking down on earth as they await their names to be called, see Gerald's plight. Eric is designated to go back to earth to lend a guiding hand (spiritually, of course) to steer Gerald into proper channels. From there on, shenanigans start and a corking comedy gets under way.

It's a merry lampoon as Eric shoves Gerald along, trying to match him up with Jeannine — a very attractive young lady indeed. Gerald is the only one pulling in the wrong direction, for his parents and Jeannine and her parents are all in cahoots in trying to bring about a match between the young people.

As Eric goes about his task, he and Gerald become great buddies, and they chat away. But, since Eric is not visible, Gerald's family and friends think he has gone stark, raving mad when they hear him carrying on these one-way conversations. They humor him accordingly, giving additional laugh situations to an audience already basking in a warm glow of fun. Eric's is a spirit of determination, and he doesn't relinquish his grasp on Gerald until he has him safely in the arms of a happy Jeannine.

## BAKER'S



## PLAYS

569 BOYLSTON ST., BOSTON 16, MASS.

## I DIRECT

(Continued from page 16)

What a blow to one's Ego!  
But behind and beyond it all  
has Emerged *The Director* —

The Director who understands:  
(in the words of Gassner)

\* The art of play craftsmanship, for  
there isn't one play in a hundred that  
Evidences an *adequate* mastery of that  
art.

\*\* Acting, because professionally actors,  
like writers, have no chance and no  
place to learn their craft adequately.

\*\*\* Every branch of the Theatre, because  
the theatre today is no longer anyone's  
off place between, radio, television  
and Hollywood.

The Director must not only know his  
business but he must know Everyone's  
business too!

But  
he  
must  
never  
let  
anyone  
know  
he  
knows  
it!

He must have  
Dreams — Crystal clear!  
Knowledge of the Past of the Theatre,  
Hopes for its future.  
Study all theories

to develop his own.

Work for the play,  
Build a throne  
Through honest endeavor!  
Use Patterns  
that glitter

Like Winter's first frost.

Build strong —

A wood Cross —

Adorn it with Wonder,

With work, and with

Care — He'll be

God's Gift to the Theatre —

A Director — rare!

• • •

We were content in our minds as we  
tackled our job — had the full support of  
the gang . . .

Not a Snob —

In the Ensemble to gum-up the works —  
Everyone was assigned to a job,  
and no one to shirk.

First, Scripts had been read by the sixes  
and dozens —

By noted playwrights,  
and I guess by some of their cousins.

The play, we decided, must promise to  
give thru its own vitality —

The right to live!

Should we choose:

A Comedy,

A Farce,

A Tragedy, true?

Guess we'd only know

By thumbing them thru!

Farces and Comedies need  
mathematical precision;  
Fantasies — lightness, and  
delicate rhythm!

Is Tragedy a thing we must shun —  
Too hard on the Emotions of the  
Young?

Maybe we should do a cutting from  
*The Taming of the Shrew*, or

Shaw's *St. Joan*,

Or — *The Medium and the Telephone* —  
a *Happy Journey* or *Antic Spring*!

That's a neat show

and right up our alley!

Gracious, the parts just

fit Marilee, Don and Sally.

Sure, it's old, but it's always new,

Cause it's about kids like Me and You!

'Tis about:

Teen-Age twitters

on an Ant hill brown!

Boy, it will surely

Bring our School renown.

We secured the rights,

and royalty paid.

Planned a prompt book

and a small stage model made.

We studied it thoroly,

Seriously, joyously —

It was jolly-poking-at

us-cheerful fun!

Holding the mirror up

to teen-age life!

It would be great to

our ownelves imitate?

We'd do it right

and never overplay

The fanciful Comedy!

It was almost a review

of our four happy years



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in Our Wonderful School!

We could almost see

Each one we knew

in the Cast as the Author

had written them so true —

So it was Easy to Select

the Cast —

That would bring the play

to Life — all this

was easily done without

any strife.

Then we let each contract

Most Carefully, and then

set about to design the Colorful

Scenery.

Then planned the business

in exact detail,

and Scheduled rehearsals, to which

each must

be without fail!

They were friendly rehearsals

because we were all friends,

and knew we were together

to tie all ends into one

perfect whole!

And we worked with all our

hearts and Soul

To do the job right!

Two weeks were allotted

to fuse all our art.

Then Dress Rehearsal

brot all together

and we were ready to

Start on the boards,

the lights and ready for

Applause!



All mechanical difficulties  
had been ironed out...  
All areas were lighted properly,  
of that no doubt.  
The Costumes, the Scenery, the props were  
all there!  
Excitement, Anticipation, and Butterflies  
were Everywhere!

Movement, pace and pitch were true —  
So to rehearsals we could mark  
— Finis — (thru).  
For it was on to State  
and the Enchantment  
of a College  
Campus! Where we'd see Bette Belle  
and 'put on our play'  
and put it on well! \* \* \*

It was a Festival Supreme  
Where Our Theatre was Queen  
With a Gathering of the Young and the Fair  
who were:

Looking beyond Tomorrow's  
Cleaning Thorofare!  
Looking and learning,  
Loving and yearning  
To give—what Youth has to give: Laughter,  
tears,

Spirit,  
Craftsmanship,  
Ambition,  
Loyalty and  
Courage

To the Future.  
\* \* \*

ANTIC SPRING was rated fine  
and My Master was in line —  
for a Scholarship!  
Uncle Sam had a bid in too  
For his Service in Marine Blue,  
and a West Point exam  
Had found him — "All Man!"  
Now — Really

What to do!  
and what about me?  
\* \* \*

We stood there — still. Most of the  
gay, sad crowd had moved on; the glow  
on the hill was slowly ebbing away as I  
glanced lovingly at my Master.

I looked at his *Best Thespian* pin,  
and then looked, as best I could, at  
my *own* Better-than-Best Thespian  
blanket, — with, — no, not four stars,  
but five Dog Stars!

and  
then  
I looked tenderly at little Masks, (she  
had been to most functions with us of  
late) and

Winked — for she knew  
that Each star was  
for one of our  
Pups!  
Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aris-  
tophanes, and Mrs. McThing!

\* \* \*  
My Master would be gone  
and what about me?  
Well, What About Me?!  
AS A BEST THESPIAN  
I HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES \* \* \*

## INDEX TO VOLUME XXV

October, 1953, to May, 1954

	Mo. Pg.		Mo. Pg.
Anniversary Conference Picture Preview .....	May 4	"Our Place in the Picture" .....	Oct. 8
Arena Staging (Series)		"Planting the Seed" .....	May 12
"Housing" .....	Oct. 14	Plays of the Month:	
"Lighting Equipment" .....	Nov. 12	<i>Alabaster Box, The</i> .....	Apr. 20
"Lighting Control" .....	Dec. 11	<i>Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp</i> .....	Nov. 14
"Scenery, Properties, Sound" .....	Jan. 11	<i>Annie Get Your Gun</i> .....	Jan. 14
"Make-Up and Costuming" .....	Feb. 10	<i>Berkeley Square</i> .....	Jan. 14
"Directing" .....	Mar. 14	<i>Clutching Claw, The</i> .....	Feb. 20
"Acting" .....	Apr. 15	<i>Curious Savage, The</i> .....	Apr. 21
"Publicity" .....	May 17	<i>Elizabeth, The Queen</i> .....	Apr. 21
Belgium, Secondary School Drama in .....	Mar. 24	<i>Father of the Bride</i> .....	Mar. 19
Best Thespians, 1952-53 .....	Nov. 22	<i>George Washington Slept Here</i> .....	Dec. 20
Blank, Earl, ed.: Plays of the Month, q. v.		<i>Goodbye, My Fancy</i> .....	Feb. 21
—"Planting the Seed" .....	May 12	<i>Good Housekeeping</i> .....	Nov. 15
Book Reviews, see "Brief Views"		<i>Guest in the House</i> .....	May 22
"Brief Views" (Book reviews), Last page each issue		<i>Heiress, The</i> .....	Nov. 14
"Community Servant, A" .....	Mar. 10	<i>I Remember Mama</i> .....	May 22
"Dear Fellow Thespians" .....	Nov. 8	<i>Jane Eyre</i> .....	Dec. 21
DeLisi, Frank A.: "Members of the Cast" ....	Mar. 12	<i>January Thaw</i> .....	Feb. 20
Denmark, Secondary School Drama in .....	Apr. 12	<i>Jump Over the Moon</i> .....	Mar. 18
Derwent, Clarence: "Greetings from ANTA" ..	Mar. 7	<i>Late Christopher Bean, The</i> .....	Oct. 18
"Don't Darken the Room!" .....	Feb. 15	<i>Life with Father</i> .....	Apr. 20
"Dreams Do Come True" .....	Oct. 10	<i>Lo and Behold</i> .....	Oct. 18
Elicker, Paul E.: "Honor to Whom Honor Is Due" .....	Apr. 7	<i>Man Who Came to Dinner, The</i> .....	May 22
England, Secondary School Drama in .....	Oct. 16	<i>Nine Girls</i> .....	Oct. 19
France, Secondary School Drama in .....	Feb. 12	<i>No More Homework</i> .....	Mar. 18
Friederich, Willard: "Brief Views," q. v.		<i>Our Hearts Were Young and Gay</i> .....	Jan. 15
Germany, Secondary School Drama in .....	Nov. 13	<i>Papa Is All</i> .....	Feb. 21
"Give Us More Shakespeare" .....	Apr. 11	<i>Pygmalion</i> .....	May 23
"Greetings from ANTA" .....	Mar. 7	<i>Ramshackle Inn</i> .....	Oct. 18
Grey, Margaret: "Then and Now" .....	Dec. 8	<i>Room for One More</i> .....	Mar. 18
Hewitt, Bernard: "Our Heartiest Congratula- tions" .....	Dec. 7	<i>Silver Cord, The</i> .....	Dec. 20
Holland, Secondary School Drama in .....	Dec. 12	<i>Sky High</i> .....	Nov. 14
"Honor to Whom Honor Is Due" .....	Apr. 7	<i>'Sno Haven</i> .....	Jan. 15
Jennings, Blandford: "Our Place in the Pic- ture" .....	Oct. 8	<i>Strange Boarders</i> .....	Apr. 20
Leeper, Harry T.: "Dear Fellow Thespians" ..	Nov. 8	<i>Why the Chimes Rang</i> .....	Dec. 22
"Look! No Nerves!" .....	Dec. 10	"Play's the Thing, The" .....	Jan. 9
Marshall, Doris Marsolais (Series):		"Power of Organization, The" .....	May 12
"I Choose Dramatics" .....	Oct. 13	Radio and TV (Reviews)	
"I Build Scenery" .....	Nov. 11	Oct. 22, Nov. 18, Dec. 22, Jan. 18, Feb. 18, Mar. 20, Apr. 22,	May 20
"I Make Costumes" .....	Dec. 14	Roberts, Lloyd E.: "Dreams Do Come True" ..	Oct. 10
"I Make Up" .....	Jan. 12	"Running the House" .....	Oct. 11, Nov. 10
"I Act" .....	Feb. 11	Saunders, Freddie Milam: "Look! No Nerves!"	Dec. 10
"I Sell the Show" .....	Mar. 13	Secondary School Drama Abroad (Series)	
"I Made Thespians!" .....	Apr. 14	In England .....	Oct. 16
"I Direct a Play" .....	May 16	In Germany .....	Nov. 13
Masters, Lillian Decker: "Two for the Show" ..	May 14	In Holland .....	Dec. 12
"Members of the Cast" .....	Mar. 12	In Switzerland .....	Jan. 10
Miller, Frederick K.: "Our Pioneer Playhouse" ..	Apr. 10	In France .....	Feb. 12
Miller, Leon C.: "More in '54" .....	Apr. 8	In Belgium .....	Mar. 24
Miller, Mary: "There All the Honor Lies" ....	Feb. 8	In Denmark .....	Apr. 12
Mills, Si: Radio and TV, q. v.		Skinner, Ted: Arena Staging, q. v.	
Mitchell, Emily M.: "Running the House" .. Oct. 11, Nov. 10		Smith, Rose G.: "The Play's the Thing" .....	Jan. 9
"More in '54" .....	Apr. 8	Sublett, Ernest: "A Community Servant" ....	Mar. 10
Movies (Reviews)		Switzerland, Secondary School Drama in ....	Jan. 10
Oct. 24, Nov. 20, Dec. 19, Jan. 20, Feb. 22, Mar. 23, Apr. 18,	May 24	Theatre (Professional)	
Murphy, Clarence R.: "Give Us More Shakes- peare" .....	Apr. 11	Oct. 25, Nov. 21, Dec. 18, Jan. 21, Feb. 23, Mar. 22, Apr. 19,	May 25
Myers, Paul: Movies, q. v.		"Then and Now" .....	Dec. 8
— Theatre, q. v.		"There All the Honor Lies" .....	Feb. 8
Opp, Paul E.: "The Power of Organization" ..	May 12	Thespian Chatter	
"Our Heartiest Congratulations" .....	Dec. 7	Oct. 26, Dec. 24, Jan. 22, Feb. 24, Mar. 26, Apr. 24,	May 26
"Our Pioneer Playhouse" .....	Apr. 10	"Two for the Show" .....	May 14
		TV, see Radio and TV	
		Tyler, Gerald: Secondary School Drama Abroad (Series) q. v.	

# BRIEF VIEWS

By WILLARD FRIEDERICH



## For the Producing Group —

**MISTER PEEPERS** by Marrijane and Joseph Hayes. 3-act comedy; Samuel French; 7M, 7W, and extras. Royalty: \$35. Setting: Teachers' Lounge at Jefferson City High School.

The hesitant, kindly, bumbling, obtuse Mr. Peepers of TV fame is now brought to the stage, struggling, as usual, with all the problems that can beset an indecisive high-school science teacher. Even if this script lacks the subtle humor of the TV show, it is quite entertaining in its own broader manner. The adult characters are quite good, being something more than mere types—which are what one usually get when high-school plays present school teachers. The students are a bit more obvious, but they are not so important to the story. On the whole many groups should enjoy doing this play, especially if they want a flexible cast; several of these parts could be easily changed to male or female roles and of course the extras can be any number desired.

**THE CLOWN AND HIS CIRCUS** by Conrad Seiler. 3-act children's fantasy; Longmans, Green; 5M, 6W, and just about as many extra boys or girls as one wishes to use (5 at least). Royalty: \$15. Setting: A sky backdrop, with as many scene pieces as one wishes to supply.

Dodo, the clown, loses his circus but finds four animal-friends who have done likewise. They join forces and prevent three obviously evil robbers from ruining the birthday of Mrs. Floaterpusher's little girl, Dumpling, by giving for her a command performance of their circus.

This charming comedy-fantasy is one that any young audience should love: the plot is interesting and full of action (even dance, music, and acrobatic stunts); the characters are lively and appealing (including Dodo, and his friends, a rabbit, monkey, donkey, and lion); and the dialogue is snappy and directed right at children (even to the point of asking them for responses and contributions). The play can be set with very simple or elaborate pieces, as circumstances allow; ditto, the costumes.

**ESPECIALLY MOTHER** by Selena Royle and George Renavent. 3-act comedy; Banner; 3M, 2W, and 2 roles that could be either. Royalty: \$25. Setting: The den, music room, or what you will, of a California mansion.

This infectious comedy was written and first played by two old favorites of stage and screen and, consequently, it has an air of authority and mature repartee that is not frequently found in plays written for the high-school trade. The plot is not very different: Mother, a widow of a materialistic man who put her on the shelf, is reveling in a new-found freedom and usefulness—much to the delight of her two children, who have also suddenly discovered the glow of becoming a "family." Her possible marriage to an old friend, a carbon-copy of her former husband, gives the children nightmares; but they take much more kindly to her interest in their new roomer, a refugee scientist from Europe. Dialogue is brisk and fresh, and the characterizations equally zesty without being stereotyped.

Some groups may have difficulty with the large ornate setting required (including a piano,

which is frequently used by the son, and an inter-com system), but these should not be insurmountable obstacles.

**GOLDEN RIVER** by Vera and Ken Tarpley. 3-act musical play; Row-Peterson; 5M, 5W, and small chorus. Royalty: \$25. Setting: Main room of the Walsh Ranch.

Mr. Tarpley, sponsor of the Thespian troupe at Crystal Lake, Illinois, together with Mrs. Tarpley, has once again given us an entertaining play with music. The plot concerns the Walsh family, struggling for a bare existence on their ranch, and what happens to them when son Jim, without telling his parents, advertises a free two-weeks' vacation to anyone interested in buying the place. Seven people arrive (one in a helicopter on the roof) and are happily received—as paying guests—by Mrs. Walsh. By the time the two weeks are up, Jim has to decide between two romances, a bear with a wristwatch has frightened everybody to death, and, most important, the way has been opened for turning the useless ranch into a paying Dude resort. There are a few slightly too-obvious bits of slap-stick in the action, but, by and large, the characters, story, and dialogue are considerably above average.

Two men and three women do virtually all the singing of the eleven catchy tunes (by Mrs. Tarpley; arrangements by Barbara Sherman), and the chorus appears only once, at the end of Act III, for a brief two-part number. All songs are in medium and low ranges with the exception of one that goes above "e." For the group that would like to tackle a musical play but feels it cannot attempt a complicated operetta, this play is heartily recommended.

**REMAINS TO BE SEEN** by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse. 3-act mystery comedy; Dramatists Play Service; 16M, 3W. Royalty: On application. Setting: Living room of a Park Ave. apartment.

A modest success on Broadway a short while ago, this play will be quite adaptable to some high-school groups and audiences. The problem of who murdered wealthy Travis Revercombe, and why, is a tense and interesting one; since most groups enjoy doing a mystery thriller now and then, this might be a more credible and intelligent choice than many of the popular but less logical scripts.

Most of the probable obstacles will be technical: that is, a secret passageway with a swinging-bookcase door, some split-second light cues, and the need for an actor who can play the drums. Brief editing of language might also be necessary in some areas.

## For the Dramatics Teacher —

**TEACHING SPEECH IN HIGH SCHOOLS** by W. J. Friederich and Ruth A. Wilcox. Macmillan, 1950, 487 pp.

This review is concerned with the section of this book, Chapters 11-18, "Dramatics," since this is primarily my area of teaching interest. At the risk of sounding like the dubious peddler of "fix-it" pills as the panacea of all ills, I say at the beginning that it is difficult for me to see how any teacher of dramatics, whether experienced or inexperienced, can afford to be without this book.

Chapters 11 through 16 cover the following units: Dramatics — Objectives and Backgrounds, Acting, Producing and Writing, Extracurricular Dramatics Programs, Radio and Television, Activities Allied with Speech. And, each chapter follows a parallel clean-cut procedure: Specific

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Goals, A Proposed Syllabus, and Suggested Methods and Procedures. Chapters 17 and 18 are grouped as Part 3: *Evaluating Results of the Teaching of Speech.*

To the prospective or beginning teacher of dramatics, the specific well-developed teaching plans and suggested lists of plays should prove invaluable, especially since the plans are completely free of nebulous theorizing. To the experienced teacher, the abundance of teaching and testing charts which one always plans to develop "when one has time" and never does), the wealth of bibliographical material, and the evaluation of purposes and procedures should prove a godsend. The very best thinking in the field of secondary school theatre as it is represented in articles in such publications as *EDUCATIONAL THEATRE JOURNAL*, *DRAMATICS*, and others has been judiciously culled, cited, and quoted, as the situation under discussion demands.

Tying together and motivating the organization of this book is the sound approach to the whole idea of dramatics in the high schools as epitomized by the following series of brief quotations from the introduction to the section: The authors say, "The prospective teacher should resolve: 1) Not to ignore the obvious premise: 'That the school theatre is to be devoted primarily to education and only incidentally to entertainment.' 2) Not to forget the broad potentialities of the dramatics program. 3) Not to let the program get out of hand. 4) Not, on the other hand, to let the program get so limited that it encompasses only a chosen few students. 5) Not to neglect organized planning. 6) Not to forget variety in the picture as a whole. 7) Not to ignore the right kind of stimuli or, if present, not to let it get out of its proper stratum of importance. 8) Not to encourage hopes of professionalism in the students. 9) and, lastly, not to lay himself open to negative criticism."

(Reviewed by Frieda E. Reed, Sponsor, Thespian Troupe 1000, Upper Darby, Pa.)

**WORLD THEATRE IN PICTURES** by Tom Prideaux. Greenberg, 1953, 256 pp.

Composed of photos of amateur and professional productions, reprinted from *LIFE Magazine* (with brief transitional explanations), this is one of the most stimulating visual aids on the market. Although the majority of plays are modern American ones, they nevertheless range from Greek and Roman days to the present. An incidental attraction is the fact that virtually every important modern performer is also represented. No drama library should be without this book.

**PARKER'S TELEVISION PLAYS** by Ken Parker. Northwestern Press, 1954, 245 pp.

A collection of five half-hour and three hour TV plays of all types, several of which might be useful for advanced high-school casts, especially if used for class experimentation or on variety and assembly programs. All are subject to \$5 and \$10 royalties. The book is especially valuable in view of the dearth of TV scripts on the market at the present time.

**TELEVISION WRITING AND SELLING** by E. B. Roberts. The Writer, 1954, 498 pp.

This is the most clear, complete, and interesting book on TV playwriting your reviewer has read thus far. Even though presented from the point of view of complex commercial TV dramas, it should be useful to any students who wish to attempt a TV script or who merely wish to acquire more understanding of the TV play. There are four good examples of complete drama scripts, and many good excerpts from others.

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